MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY
CAPSTONE PROJECT

Speak. Share. Thrive. Revisited: A Retrospective Study of the Public Engagement Process for Alberta's Social Policy Framework

Submitted by:
McKensi Mills

Approved by Supervisor:
Dr. Ian Brodie
March 15, 2014

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of PPOL 623 and completion of the requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisor Dr. Ian Brodie for his assistance in my project and connecting me with his network in order to gain feedback on my research. Additionally, thank you to those who interviewed with me. These interviews provided me valuable insight into my research objectives, most notably Leann Wagner, Executive Director of Strategic Policy Initiatives with the Alberta Government.

Table of Contents

THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Capstone Executive Summary

This Capstone Project provides insight into public engagement practices and analysis of the Alberta Government's *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process. In an effort to address social policy issues facing Albertans, Alberta Human Services was mandated to create Canada's first provincial Social Policy Framework. The Framework, released in 2013, was a direct outcome of input collected through the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process. This process collected input from over 31,000 Albertans over six months using a variety of different engagement techniques. Public contributions from employees, businesses, social services, community members, and families provided the content for this Framework, and will guide Alberta's social policy initiatives over the next decade and beyond.

This Capstone Project identifies public participation's history and theory, the merits and difficulties of public engagement practices, as well as direct insight into the experiences of *Speak. Share. Thrive.*'s creators and participators. The analysis is centred on identifying best practices and gaps in the engagement process. It provides insight into advantages and challenges of *Speak. Share. Thrive.* and offers policy options to advance accomplishments and address barriers.

Introduction

Public participation is a recognized tool used by governments and organizations to gain insight into communicated topics. Engagement with the public is a means for government to gather information about citizens' requirements. As defined by Canada's Public Policy Forum, "[p]ublic engagement is a new way of thinking about how governments, stakeholders, communities and ordinary citizens can work together to achieve complex, societal goals" (Public Policy Forum, n.d., What is Public Engagement?). From increased complexity and changing outcomes, there has emerged "a new paradigm favouring collaborative versus consultative public engagement" (Dunleavy, 2009, p. 20). Local and provincial governments are breaking traditional barriers of government-citizen roles and introducing a notion that ordinary citizens have a place alongside conventional forms of expertise in policy decision making (Dunleavy, 2009, p. 19). Public engagement is a core competency of the public service in the 21st century (Wagner, 2014, January 23). By providing citizens the opportunity to be consulted on new or changing policy, it is likely there will be a greater understanding and acceptance of decisions made by government. Thoughtful understanding of how the government will manage expectations around engagement processes and harness outcomes to solve complex policy issues will be necessary.

The Ministry of Alberta Human Services, established in October 2011, offers several programs and supports involving social policy in Alberta. Alberta Human Services was created to capture several social policy areas that were previously in separate ministries. These included Employment and Immigration, Children and Youth Services, Housing and Urban Affairs, and

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Seniors (Alberta Human Services, 2012, p. 20). There was a recognized need to establish a policy that would efficiently use resources to provide a citizen-centred approach to guide all social initiatives of the Alberta Government (Alberta Human Services, 2013, p. 3).

Alberta set out to develop Canada's first provincial Social Policy Framework using citizens' input through a public engagement campaign called *Speak. Share. Thrive.* Alberta's Social Policy Framework was created by Albertans establishing a new standard for engagement in social policy. The *Speak. Share. Thrive.* participation process was pivotal in creating conditions necessary to achieve the desired social policy. Did the Alberta Government practice public participation techniques that exhibit strong outcomes and what identified gaps can be addressed in order to increase success of future initiatives of Alberta's Social Policy Framework?

Taking effect on January 1, 2014, the Building Families and Community Act gives all Albertans an opportunity to contribute and evaluate social policy initiatives of the Alberta Government. This Act establishes Family and Community Engagement Councils that will aid the government in identifying social issues in Alberta and working together to create local solutions (Alberta Queen's Printer, 2013). This legislation puts into action Alberta's Social Policy Framework, a policy developed with input from over 31,000 Albertans across the province. This project's impressive civic participation and collaborative approach provided the foundation for policy directions; the aim was to develop a policy that takes into account Albertans knowledge and experience to fit their needs.

This insight included the Framework's goals developed by Albertans: "protect the vulnerable, reduce inequality, create a person-centered system of high-quality services, and enable collaboration and partnerships" (Alberta Human Services, 2014, Outline). The legislated Family and Community Engagement Councils were an outcome of these goals, most notably the "enable collaboration and partnerships" objective (Alberta Human Services, 2014, Outline). These engagement councils will work collaboratively with common purpose, connecting families and communities, government, businesses, and non-profits to address social challenges (Alberta Human Services, 2014, Engaging Communities).

What is Alberta's Social Policy Framework?

The Alberta Government has defined social policy as follows:

Social policy is about how we meet human needs - needs like housing, employment, nurturing, safety and security, and child care. Social policy can be expressed in how we care for one another and how individuals, communities, and government come together to address social issues. Social policy includes actions, guidelines, principles, laws, and regulations. It involves creating the conditions to maintain a minimum standard of well-being for Albertans, ensuring the fair treatment of individuals, and providing services to people in need. By stating and communicating our approach, we can better organize ourselves around shared outcomes and make more strategic use of our resources. (2014, Social Policy Framework 101)

Former Premier Alison Redford's stated priority areas of government included, "investing in families and communities," "securing Alberta's economic future," and "advancing world-leading resource stewardship" (Alberta Government, 2013, slide 3). Under the "investing in families and communities" directive, a mandate to develop a Social Policy Framework was defined. The Minster of Human Services was mandated to "[w]ork with other ministries to develop a social policy framework to guide the alignment and redesign of social policy and programs to achieve better outcomes for Albertans" (Alberta Government, 2013, slide 3).

Social challenges faced by Albertans affect everyone; an inclusive social policy framework for Alberta will also addresses the second priority area, "securing Alberta's economic future," as social and economic priorities are connected. Social policy can uniquely benefit from public engagement outcomes as policy makers can gain value from understanding issues faced by those who participate. Social policy outcomes, although often targeted at marginalized populations, contribute to a healthy community enjoyed by everyone. Engaging a representative sample of Albertans was a stated objective of this project; it was indicated that change can only be achieved if everyone participates in creating and implementing this Social Policy Framework (Wagner, 2014, January 23). The engagement process was done entirely in-house; there were no outside consultants hired for this process. Project leads recognized that engagement practices are a competency of government in the 21st century which influenced a solely internal engagement project design and consultation, namely, *Speak*. *Share*. *Thrive*. (Wagner, 2014, January 23).

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

What is *Speak. Share. Thrive.?*

The initial *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement ran from June - November 2012 (Alberta

Government, 2012, p. 13), and attracted input from 31,300 Albertans (Alberta Government,

2013, Engagement Statistics). There were a total of 59,600 participation activities during this

time, including such innovative methods as the first ever Alberta Government wiki (with 135

entries). There was also an online survey (5,466 completed responses), online conversations

through comment boards, blog opportunities and twitter, as well as government-led engagement

sessions and site visits, and 388 community-led conversations; see Appendix 1 for a pictorial

representation of engagement statistics. There was also an option to share input privately via

email; some of these activities are ongoing and the Alberta Government clearly wants them to

continue.

> While it is intended as a tool to guide efforts in social policy for the next 10 to 15 years, it
>
> is meant to be a living document and therefore cannot remain immune to the rapid
>
> changes of our world. Only continuous and open dialogue will help us see these shifts
>
> and respond to them together. (2013, slide 20)
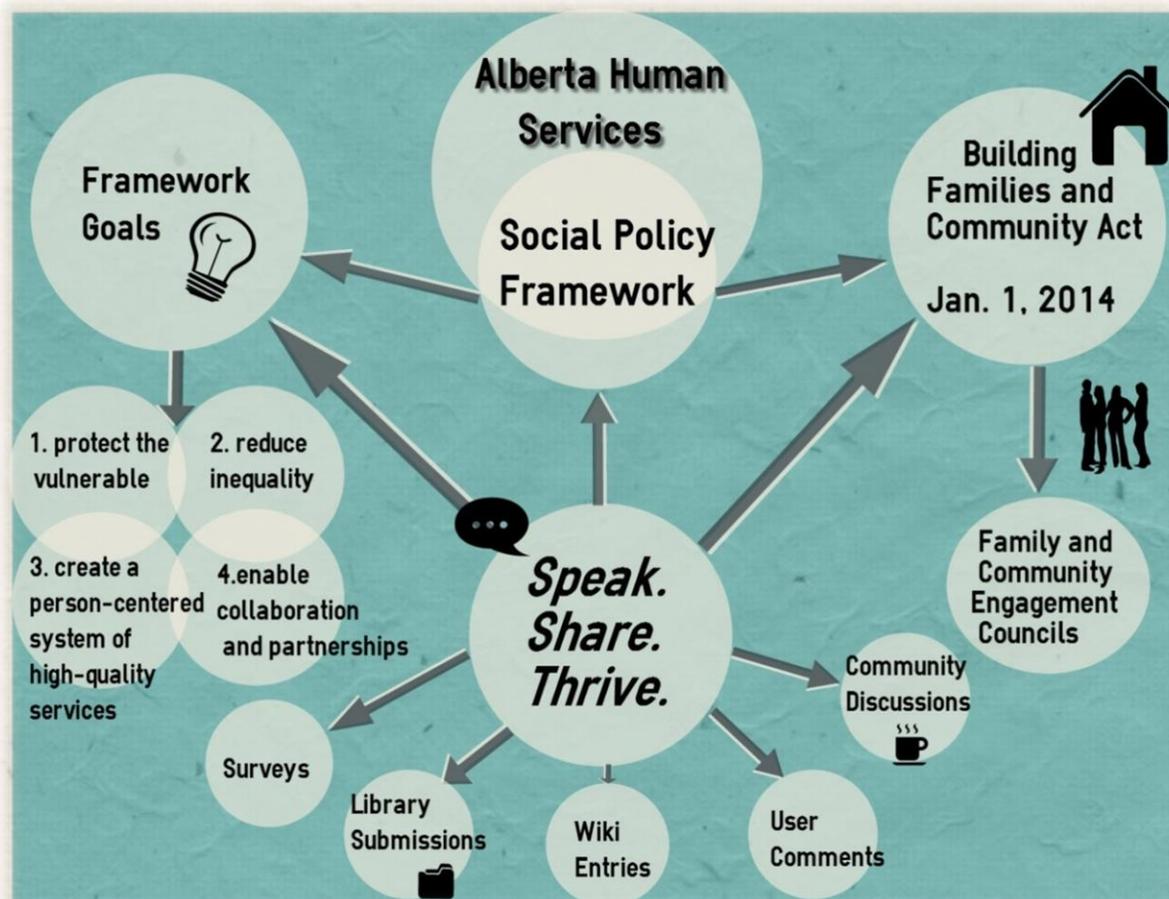
Figure 1—Source: *Speak. Share. Thrive.* **Infographic adapted from Alberta Government, 2013, Alberta's Social Policy Framework; Alberta Government, 2013, Engagement Statistics; Alberta Human Services, 2014, Engaging Communities**

Citizen Expectations

Federally, we see a shift toward public engagement acceptance as seen in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada (2012). Under the Consultation and Citizenship Engagement Policy Requirements, this passage is notable:

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Consult the public, listen to and take account of people's interests and concerns when establishing priorities, developing policies, and planning programs and services. The government's obligation to reach out and communicate with citizens is concomitant with the right of citizens to address and be heard by their government. In a democracy, listening to the public, researching, evaluating and addressing the needs of citizens is critical to the work of government…(Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Policy Statement)

This increased participatory democracy model ultimately holds government more accountable for implementing policy that effects citizens. This movement can be attributed to several things, some of which include citizen expectations of individualized service, scrutiny of Canadian politics, as well as advancement in technology. First, the public may provide the government with information that they may not be aware of or affected by. Government is no longer viewed as the expert in all policy arenas, and as taxpayers and stakeholders, citizens believe they have a right to be heard. Second, there is more scrutiny placed on governments through increased access to news stories. This propels citizens to want to get involved in policy outcomes that affect them, especially if they are not fond of current policy outcomes. Third, as access to technology by citizens has evolved, so does their desire to be involved in the policy process. There is a demand by the public to have a forum to voice their opinion, especially as technology has permitted people to weigh in on issues easily.

Progressively, governments are inviting citizens to give their input using technology, social media, and the internet as a forum for participation; but this engagement creates an expectation that citizens' input will have an impact on policy outcomes. Whether a disguise for deception or a keen interest in developing policy citizens want, representation of citizens' input in policy will remain the check and balance. For these reasons, Alberta Human Services has the opportunity to be a leader in this area by utilizing public engagement strategies in formulating policy that affects citizens, as seen in Alberta's Social Policy Framework.

Literature Review

Public engagement goes by many names and is often used synonymously with public participation, community involvement, civic collaboration, civil consultation, democratic deliberation, etc. All of these terms are used interchangeably; citizen is public, and involvement is participation. There have been several influences on the intensification of civic participation initiatives in Canada from increasingly complex policy requirements to a lack of trust in institutions over the last decade (Lenihan, 2012, p. 13). "Growing complexity means policy fields that used to be viewed as relatively distinct and self-contained are increasingly seen as interconnected" (Lenihan, 2012, p. 57). This has played a significant role in citizens' expectations of transparency and accountability, the seemingly buzz worthy terms of 21st century politics.

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) describes how open and inclusive policy making is a requisite for effective policy and citizen expectations of government:

> Public engagement in the design and delivery of public policy and services can help governments better understand people's needs, leverage a wider pool of information and resources, and improve compliance, contain costs and reduce the risk of conflict and delays downstream. (p. 21)

Sincere or not, in recent times, public engagement is on the agenda and is being utilized as an important tool for governments and organizations.

Keeping in mind that these terms are used interchangeably, there are several theories based on citizen participation, and other related theories that overlap, for example democratic theory and community development theory. Public policy development and analysis theories, including basic decision making theories, also play an important role in the development of democratic participation. These connections are vast and are typically organized to suit the explicit need of project, government, or organization. The creators of the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process used grounded theory, specifically used in social research, to develop Alberta's Social Policy Framework (Wagner, 2014, January 23).

This literature review will discuss the history of public participation and summarize citizen participation theory. It will explain grounded theory to illustrate strategies used by policy developers of the Social Policy Framework. The impact of media on government

communication, policy news reporting, and its implications to citizen engagement will be examined. Public participation processes will be described to highlight the distinction of types and levels of impact, including a discussion about the growing importance of web participation and its influence in policy making. It will conclude with an explanation of public engagement merits and difficulties.

Public Participation History

For as long as people have come together to form communities that require collaborative efforts for survival, community involvement has been present. From conversations over coffee at kitchen tables, to implementing decisions based on collective agreement, public participation has been practiced. Although community involvement is ancient, using public consultation in a legislated government setting is around a half century old, which dates back to around the time of the seminal piece of literature in this area by Sherry Arnstein (1969) called *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*. The western origins of this community practice are dated to the Athenian population and spread of democracy. In Canada, public involvement is recorded in the time of initial settlement; change in local communities was a process of education and public collaboration in solutions (Stroick, 1998, p. 71). See Appendix 2 for a graphic timeline progression of the history of public participation through the 1990s, noted as *Key Events in the Evolution of Public Involvement.*

Moving into the late 19th and early 20th centuries, citizen participation was part of community development planning, land use planning, associations and union organizations, and

social policy issues. "Social movements related to education, housing, and public health" were increasingly important areas that citizens felt government should deal with effectively (Stroick, 1998, p. 74). The Great Depression and end of the World War II characterized a time where public participation was being conducted by public and non-government organizations and then by government to try to address the societal and financial problems of the times. Just as a federal planning approach was adopted for use during war efforts, this centralized approach to planning that was successful during the war was continued (Stroick, 1998, p. 75).

The post-war efforts needed to rebuild North America sparked an urban planning effort using citizen input, but it trended downward in the 1950s and 1960s as governments used higher-level professional methods for these initiatives. The grandiose protests against consumerism and federalism that beset this era, most notably in the United States, saw social unrest as citizens did not feel they were given the opportunity to provide meaningful input in democratic decisions (Stroick, 1998, p. 75). The protests of the 1960s were met by government with formalized mechanisms for citizens' input in social policy. "The work of local government to address social issues in both Canada and the United States was influenced by American federal antipoverty programs and subsequent American federal grant programs for model cities, new town development, community development, and urban development" (Stroick, 1998, p. 76). Public planning initiatives that involved public participation was necessary for grant qualification (Stroick, 1998, p. 76).

In reaction to upset, federal legislation in the United States set out to provide an obligation for more citizenry opportunity in policy decisions. "Similarly, the Town and County Planning Act of 1968 legislated requirements for public involvement as part of the planning process in England and Wales" (Stroick, 1998, p. 76). In Canada, public participation and community planning influenced several government policies, but were not legislated (Stroick, 1998, p. 76). Environmental decision making heavily relies on public engagement models, and have steadily improved since the American *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*. Canada followed suit with similar regulation in 1972 with the *Environmental Assessment and Review Process*, which required public consultative practices. As of 1993, the World Bank has made an "inform and consultation" requirement a part of environmental impact assessments throughout the developing world (Stroick, 1998, p. 79).

In the United States and Britain, gains in the area of public involvement of the 1970s were lost in the conservative era of President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher. In Canada's correspondingly conservative period, although public involvement trends were typically influenced by those in the U.S., they did not decline during this time, but rather sustained at a continual pace. Canada outperformed their southern neighbors with increasing use of public participation practices for policy decisions leading through until President Clinton's term in the White House (Stroick, 1998, p. 77).

The 1990s brought about a renewed significance to public participation practices. It is during this time that more formative literature was released which build upon Arnstein's (1969)

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

publication. This is also the time where associations were established and gained importance, including the International Association for Public Participation, started in 1990 (IAP2, n.d., About IAP2). The education and practice of public engagement stands alone in the realm of academia with varying levels of certification and internal and external practitioners. With the rise of technology, the Internet, and Web 2.0, public engagement can be practiced in a multitude of ways which can harness outcomes that enable meaningful government-citizen partnerships and policy. Since early 2000s, public engagement merits and difficulties are vastly researched; recognized by many governments and organizations, including OECD efforts; public participation projects are increasingly occurring internationally with those outcomes published continually.

Citizen Participation Theory

There is a plethora of public involvement literature in practical terms, but is limited in a theoretical context. Public involvement in practice is situation specific. Stroick (1998) noted that "[p]ublic involvement is neither well-grounded in theory nor a standardized, uniform process that can be applied by rote to a variety of different situations" (p. 106). In Sherry Arnstein's (1969) *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, it was first acknowledged that there are different levels of participation which focused on 'degrees of citizen power.' Arnstein equates citizen participation to citizen power. As the former Chief Advisor on Public Participation for the Model Cities Administration in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Arnstein developed a categorical summarization of citizen participation based on urban renewal,

antipoverty, and Model Cities programs. This was done through her analysis of citizenship empowerment given in 75 model cities and a subsequent 1,000 urban renewal programs (Stroick, 1998, p. 85).

"Citizen participation is citizen power" describes the eight levels; it was characterized by three degrees of citizen empowerment: nonparticipation, tokenism, citizen power (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216. "The typology, which is designed to be provocative, is arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in determining the plan and/or program (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216). The ladder ranges from bottom rung of manipulation of citizen to the top rung of citizen control, which can be akin to genuine participation; the rungs annotating the power of citizens determine the final outcome (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217). This initial work professes degrees of participation among citizens, with focused attention to the power given by institutions, as seen in Figure 2.

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
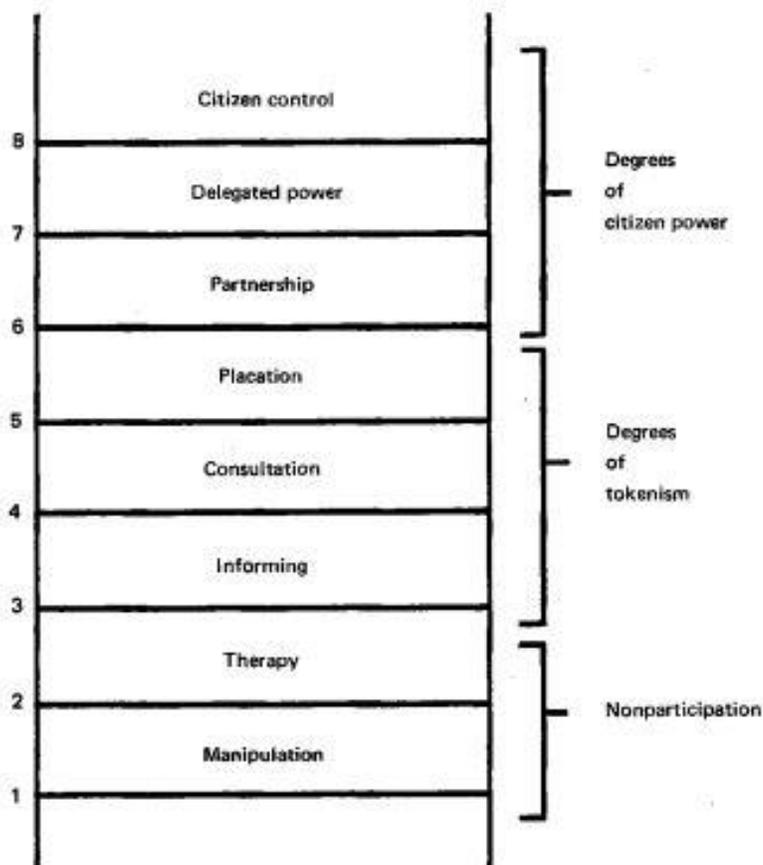
FIGURE 2 — *Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Participation*

Figure 2—Source: Arnstein, 1969, p. 217

Assumptions conclude that people gain power from choice, and that individuals are responsible for making their own lives and that of their community better by participating in decision making (CAG Consultants, n.d., p. 2). It is acknowledged that special interest groups can dominate the process (Arnstein, 1969, p. 224). It is also noted that the process of public participation is different from power to influence participation outcomes (Stroick, 1998, p. 87).

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

Other limitations include the simplicity of the model, as a broad range of experiences could take place at each rung. Arnstein also noted that necessary resources would be required for effective outcomes (Arnstein, 1969, p. 224). As CAG Consultants explained, '[t]he use of a ladder also implies that more control is always better than less control. However, increased control may not always be desired by the community and increased control without the necessary support may result in failure." (n.d., p. 2).

Since this publication, many critiques, additions, and reformulations of *A Ladder of Citizen Participation* have been released. Deeper distinctions of levels and types of participation have been offered; thoughtful reflections of dimension of power in prescribing participation and participation as a continuum have been proposed (CAG Consultants, n.d., p. 4). Many have tried to apply this theoretic framework to case studies to imply practical meaning to this typology. As well, there are several industry-specific how-to manuals of public engagement (Stroick, 1998, p. 87).

What is established is that there are few theoretical concepts that can be broadly applied to all public participation initiatives; success is recognized by similar themes, but cookie-cutter typology has proven to be unobserved. Creators of Alberta's Social Policy Framework developed their theory from participant specific feedback. However, this did not dictate the methods used for participation, but rather the content for the Framework.

Grounded Theory

The Alberta Government used grounded theory to develop their Social Policy Framework (Wagner, 2014, January 23). According to its originators, Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory is "the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research" (p. 2). According to Lingard, Albert, & Levinson (2008) from BMJ, formally the British Medical Journal, their definition of grounded theory follows:

> Its main thrust is to generate theories regarding social phenomena: that is, to develop higher level understanding that is "grounded" in, or derived from, a systematic analysis of data. Grounded theory is appropriate when the study of social interactions or experiences aims to explain a process, not to test or verify an existing theory. (Grounded Theory)

The resulting policy is therefore based on underlying issues effecting participants and not preconceived assumptions of issues thought to be faced by Albertans. This was done by collecting, coding, and categorizing data created by participants in the engagement process, and then developing the Framework around emerging themes. This method of collecting and coding data so all participants' input is documented produced a comprehensive policy illustrative of those who participated.

Grounded theory can take several forms. Comparative analysis is a large mechanism for forming theory in grounded theory. This theory is not static; the idea of "theory as process" notes the importance of an ever-changing outcome and not a finished product (Glaser and Strauss,

1967, p. 32). "Comparative analysis can be used to generate two basic kinds of theory: substantive and formal" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 32). In this context of social research, substantive theory is based on empirical areas, observational or experiential research, and formal theory is based on conceptual areas, related or derived mental concepts (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 32). Rather than forcing information into established silos, grounded formal theory is successful in situations where there is no initial theory. As collected data is not forced into certain significances, the likelihood of forming more accurate predictions and hypotheses can be recognized (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 98).

The Impact of Media on Communication and Engagement

As we move away from nightly news and daily newspapers to Netflix and IPhones, social media applications and devices are in competition of media sources as people are consumed with all the constant media, much of which has nothing to do with news or public policy. Traditional media are failing, and new media are taking over; this affects news coverage and journalism. This competition has caused a declining journalism industry, as prevalent in the shrinking decrease in news reporting organizations and the number of journalists at endured organizations. A 24-hour news cycle preserves this trend; frequency and output has replaced significant stories and policy. This has caused degradation in media quality and accuracy. Reporting has moved from important policy stories affecting citizens to celebrity Twitter content. The effects on citizen apathy have been apparent.

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

This change in news coverage has impacted government communications and reduced political platforms to sellable pieces of information with quick results to encourage re-election. This has created an environment of avoidance of complex policy issues. As well, media coverage has a profound effect on how governments design their communications. There has been a movement from media to act as representation for citizens rather than providing meaningful reporting and assessment. "Media have found it commercially rewarding to attack the effectiveness and then the legitimacy of government and its processes" (Taras and Waddell, p. 47). This has caused an environment that perpetuates a government communications strategy that is based on "risk avoidance, careful communications planning, secrecy, and a hesitancy about discussing or even disclosing options" (Taras and Waddell, p. 47).

How Canadians Communicate IV Media and Politics (2012) articulates challenges: "[w]e have growing pools of people with different information bases, different sets of agendas, expectations, standards for government performance, and policy demands, and different levels of attachment to traditionally shared institutions and values" (Taras and Waddell, p. 49). Citizens are segmenting themselves by choosing the information they consume.

> If you don't know what you don't know and are unwilling to delegate others to tell you, you begin to narrow your universe to one driven by your preconceived interests.
> Governments can exacerbate the problem when they determine that it is not in their interest to devote extraordinary efforts to engage the disengaged. (Taras and Waddell, 2012 p. 52)

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Citizen disengagement from politics and society—voting, donating to charity, volunteering, education of Canadian history and institutions—has considerable implications for democracy (Taras and Waddell, 2012 p. 104). This may lead to a country where the decisions for many are made by few. As well, as Taras and Waddell explain, "[w]ithout engaged citizens, audiences for TV news shows and certainly for newspapers will dry up, with enormous consequences for the survival of traditional media" (2012 p. 105). These implications extend to citizens having less access to policy stories and decisions that affect them.

Several interplaying pressures have changed the political and media landscape in Canada which has effected citizen engagement. "Over the last 30 years, the fields of communication, marketing, and public opinion research have grown in size and importance to the point where they now dominate politics" (Lenihan, 2012, p. 27). Currently, what is acknowledged is that there are several 'complex problems' or 'wicked problems' that require collaboration. "In essence, to say an issue is complex is to say that its causes and solutions involve a variety of links to other policy fields that are often hidden from view and surprising in their origins" (Lenihan, 2012, p. 35). Collaboration requires citizens to be engaged, and for governments to offer opportunities for collaboration with citizens and organizations to implement solutions together.

Public Participation Process

There are accepted practices when it comes to planning and implementing public participation campaigns. There are several organizations that have been a part of establishing

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

public participation as an important measure of capacity building and planning, and a necessary step in policy making and community sustainability. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) was one of the first to establish a formal group to educate and advocate for public participation. Known as a leader in the field, IAP2 started a Certificate Training Course in Public Participation which has become known as the industry standard for practitioners (IAP2, n.d., About IAP2). This list comprises several other established Canadian and International organizations, most of which started in the early 2000s: National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation, Tamarack: An Institute for Community Engagement, Foundation Strategy Group, Vibrant Communities, and Collective Impact. Academically, the Stanford Social Innovation Review is successful in bringing together practitioners and researchers in the area. As well, the International Association of Facilitators, started in 1994, is a widely utilized group for practitioners of public participation (IAF, 2013, About IAF).

There are seemingly three types of participatory government: consultative, deliberative, and engaging. Consultative is the opportunity for the public to give their view on an issue presented by government in hopes of influencing the planning or decision making process (Lenihan, 2012, p. 61). Deliberative participation is where the public is consulted and there is a deliberation period where government and the public consider the options to come up with strategies to solve policy issues at hand. The government then takes the outcomes and decides on a final process (Lenihan, 2012, p. 68). Finally, there is public engagement where the government

and the public work cohesively to find and implement solutions to difficult policy issues (Lenihan, 2012, p. 71).

Complex issues cannot be solved solely by government, and responsibility for solutions are better realized when people have a say in the plan to develop those solutions (Lenihan, 2012, p. 52). "Rethinking the policy process" will help to gain acceptance of policy that faces opposition as critics will respect the decision if they believe the process for choosing that policy was "legitimate and fair" (Lenihan, 2012, p. 57). For public engagement to be successful, initiators must follow the Golden Rule of Public Engagement, coined in *Rescuing Policy: The Case for Public Engagement.*

> It says that, if governments really want citizens and stakeholders to take some ownership of the issues, it is not enough simply to ask them for their views on the solutions. Governments must engage the public in a real dialogue where all parties work through the issues and arrive at the action plan together. (Lenihan, 2012, p. 52)

According to IAP2, "'Public participation' means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision" (IAP2, n.d., IAP2: Good public participation results in better decisions). IAP2 has established a spectrum of public participation. This is a generally accepted practitioner tool, but is proprietary to IAP2. The level of impact increases along the spectrum; the levels are inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and

empower, as seen in Figure 3. Establishing a goal and making a promise to the public are important aspects of any public participation plan. Stakeholder theory is an underlying idea represented in public engagement literature. IAP2 recognizes the importance of all stakeholders and providing an opportunity to participate regardless of power status. IAP2 has established a set of core values and code of ethics that guide practitioners in public participation.
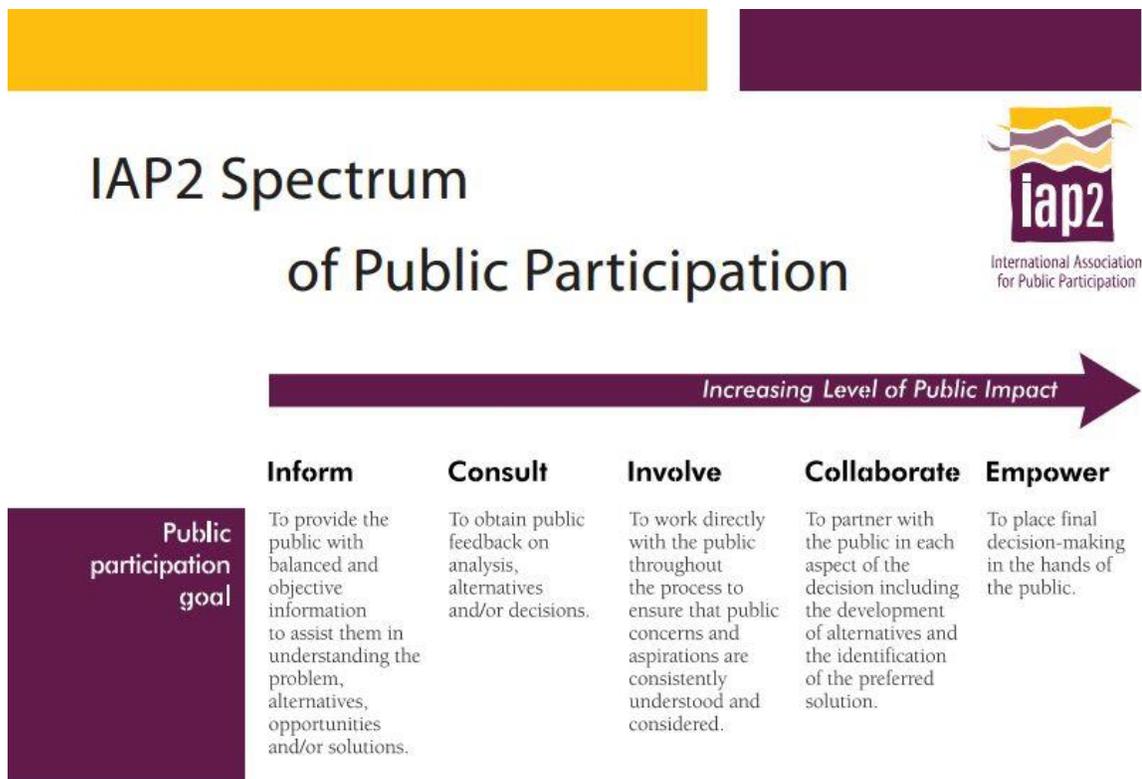

Figure 3—Source: IAP2, n.d., IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2's certificate course has three segments; first is planning for effective public participation, second is communications for effective public participation, and third is techniques

for effective public participation. Foundations are very important in designing public participation processes; it is not a technique-driven process. According to IAP2, the foundations necessary for good public participation that results in better decisions is values-based, decision-oriented, and goal-driven. Continual evaluation, not just at the end of your public participation process, helps to implement changes to increase success of the engagement. It is often that people recognize the importance of public engagement, but do not put the value on it that it needs. This results in picking a technique, for example, an open house, without going through the planning process which results in an ineffective outcome. That is why addressing the foundations will help to understand which process on the spectrum will best suit your desired outcomes, what communications are important to address, and what techniques can be used to best achieve desired goals. Several techniques can be used conjointly which provides an array of options for participants. There is increasing amount of Web 2.0 tools being used by government and organizations to encourage public engagement and input.

Web 2.0

E-democracy, as defined by Andrew Chadwick in *How Canadians Communicate IV Media and Politics* (2012), is "efforts to broaden political participation by enabling citizens to connect with one another and with their representatives via new information and communication technologies" (Taras and Waddell, p. 185). This could include undesirable citizen coalitions, but "[s]ome suggest that the Internet has the capacity to revolutionize and reinvigorate democratic politics by enhancing public participation and efficiency" (Taras and Waddell, 2012, p. 172).

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The opportunity to engage with citizens in a two-way dialogue can be more easily achieved with web tools than typical inform tools of traditional one-way practices.

According to the OECD, governments are facing a necessary transition in order to achieve "open and inclusive policy making" (OECD, 2009, p. 29). Nations have varying levels of policy and services and use of public engagement; the OECD has outlined areas where a transition will be required. Four initiatives are outlined as follows; "[m]ainstream public engagement to improve policy performance; [d]evelop effective evaluation tools; [l]everage technology and participative web; and [a]dopt sound principles to support practice" (OECD, 2009, p. 29). This provides citizens increased access to information, networks that can be organized for collective action, and an easily accessible way to participate in public discussion (McNutt, 2014, p. 49).

Focusing on leveraging technology and participatory web, Web 2.0, which includes blogs, wikis, and social media, is an important capacity of governments in the 21st century. As Table 1 illustrates, there are several forms of Web 2.0 tools that can be used to harness participatory outcomes. Web 2.0 capabilities will not solely provide public engagement: "[t]he conceptual models underpinning the participative web (i.e. horizontal vs. vertical; iterative vs. sequential; open vs. proprietary; multiple vs. binary) may be more powerful, and of wider application, than the tools themselves" (OECD, 2009, p. 29).

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

TABLE 1. Common Web 2.0 Tools in Website

Tools	Description
Blogs (Weblogs)	Synonymous for a personal website for all that requires no high level of ICT knowledge to run. It is argued that the most important characteristics of weblogs is to have a permanent Universal Resource Locater (URL) by which contents are allowed to be disseminated permanently with a permission for others to be in collaboration (Stephens, 2011).
Wikis	Types of software allowing the users to form a new web page or make additional changes in already present ones. As clearly understood from the definition, wikis can be edited, designed or shared by any one at any specific time. Traunmüller (2010, 78) defines the wikis as "knowledge collections built by collaborative edition".
Social media	Types of websites aim to make people get in touch with each other with sharing personal or any other issues with permitted peers. "The users of social networking sites are registered users who are allowed to interact with other users for social or professional purposes" (Wigand, 2010, 169).
RSS technologies	The dissemination of information based on subscription. Wigand (2010, 169) describes *really simple syndication's* aim as "RSS feeds are generally used for updating blogs, news headlines, or podcasts to users".
Social tagging	Synonymous with collaborative indexing. Social tagging is a process through which "users add metadata in the form of keywords to shared content" (Golder and Huberman, 2006, 198).
Visual share	The transmission of visual images via Web 2.0 technologies. Wigand (2010, 169) states that Youtube is the leading site in terms of video share. Flickr can be exemplified as the dissemination of photos over web.

Table 1—Source: Karkin, 2013, p. 315

Although several social media applications are becoming household names, government is lagging in implementation of these platforms. Web 2.0 is about allowing users to create content, link, and share which has three main benefits for policy making according to the OECD. First, efficiency can be achieve by creating conditions that provide less burden on government administrations and citizens, for example, making available an information request so that future

requests of a similar nature will not be required (OECD, 2009, p. 66). Second, innovation because collaboration and knowledge sharing is much more feasible for all stakeholders, inside or outside of the organization. Lastly, accountability, which is that political verbiage that seems to fill government promises and citizens desires. Web 2.0 provides an "online public space" which can be "an important asset in establishing public trust" (OECD, 2009, p. 67).

Participants in Web 2.0 conversations are held responsible for their content. As well, there is increasing development of online content that links "publically available information in innovative ways" (OECD, 2009, p. 67). Through OECD's research, participatory web has strong correlation to better policy making by enhanced service delivery as increased interaction with citizens and organizations exhibit more informed decisions. It also increases the level of internal knowledge sharing; intranet and internal platforms "translate into better policy making and service delivery to external stakeholders and users" (OECD, 2009, p. 68).

There are still big gains needed in government using Web 2.0 to foster better outcomes. According to a 2007 OECD (2009) study, out of 25 countries, 100% noted importance of using web technologies to inform citizens, 71% ranked consultation an important use of web capabilities, and only 21% thought it was important to foster Web 2.0 for policy public participation activities (p. 70). At this time, out of the 25 countries, 64% were providing Web 2.0 for providing information, 41% were asking for feedback and analyzing the results, and 32% provided online spaces for public engagement and deliberation. What should be noted is that

only 14% were using pre-existing popular online spaces to engage citizens, which indicates the rest are providing their own online opportunities (OECD, 2009, p. 71-72).

By now, using participatory web technologies for public engagement is likely made significant increases. Alberta's Social Policy Framework was able to successfully engage in Web 2.0 capabilities providing open space where content contributors were accountable via a registered account needed to make submissions. There is a pattern shift from participation 1.0 models to participation 2.0 models as seen in Table 2. "The distinguishing feature of a Participation 2.0 model is the presence of networks, flexible connections and transient audiences…" (OECD, 2009, p. 74).

	Participation 1.0 model	Tools	Participation 2.0 model	Tools
Information		• E-mail alerts • Websites		• RSS feeds • Tag clouds • Podcasts • Webcasts
Consultation		• Online forms • Online consultation		• Blogs • Online polls • Online surveys
Participation		• Discussion forums • Shared online workspaces		• E-petitions • Mash-ups • Wikis • Tagging • Virtual worlds
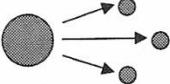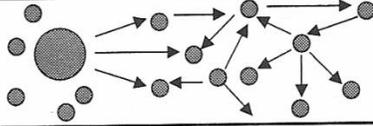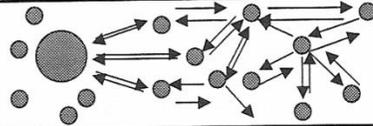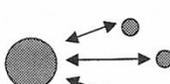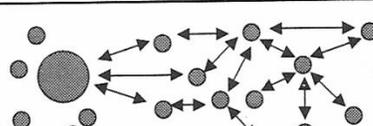
Table 2—Source: OECD, 2009, p. 73

Recognizing the many merits of participatory web initiatives, there is a similar need to understand challenges for use by government. "Rather than promoting active participation, governments may well be on the receiving end of e-petitions, spectators in collaborative

workspaces and consumers of user-generated content" (OECD, 2009, p. 74). It is not about creating new networks but fostering present networks. Online public engagement outcomes are more likely to be successful when "influence is earned through social reputation, not bureaucratic authority" (McNutt, 2014, p. 49).

Correspondingly, OECD (2009) points out possible limitations; that is, understanding what types of technology people want to use, how information can be accessed and re-purposed for citizens use, whether to develop new platforms or join existing ones, ensuring privacy of content, engaging youth now for engaged citizens later, and educating the public sector so they may participate in use of these tools (p. 74-75). It is argued that barriers to implementation are less technological as it is "organizational, cultural, and administrative" (McNutt, 2014, p. 49). Managing the technological, social, and economic changes happening outside of government will be imperative to the success and purpose of government for the future (OECD, 2009, p. 75).

Merits and Difficulties

As expressed throughout this Capstone Project, there are several benefits to using public engagement in policy making. At the forefront of the merits of public engagement is increased government knowledge that can be implemented in decision making models, as well as increased participant awareness about issues presented. Similarly, there are limitations to public engagement efforts that should be recognized and addressed in order increase likelihood of effectiveness. This includes cost and time, risks like consultation fatigue, inclusivity issues ensuring representativeness of population, and evaluation which tends to revolve around the

process and not in the success of the policy decision (OECD, 2009, p. 84). But just as prevention efforts offer savings to healthcare, citizen participation efforts can provide long-term savings and preventative solutions to societal issues. Community needs are constantly evolving; governments need to listen to changing needs and respond with repositioned services to increase effectiveness.

Public participation efforts recognize that one person, or group of people, do not know what is best for everyone, as what is best is defined differently by different people. Public participation is a technique used to gather "the wisdom of crowds," an indicator expressed by Surowiecki (2005), which may foster insight into collective intelligence in policy formulation. The collection method can differ, but conditions of "diversity, independence, and decentralization" are necessary for gathering the knowledge of a population (Surowiecki, 2005, p. 22). Individually, no matter how intelligent or uninformed someone may be, overtime groups of people have the "ability to act collectively to make decisions and solve problems" superior to experts or small groups of people (Surowiecki, 2005, XVII). "What is striking, though—and what makes a phrase like "the wisdom of crowds" meaningful—is just how much information a group's collective verdict so often contains" (Surowiecki, 2005, p. 11). Statistically, even a small group of people, Surowiecki's example is 100 people, will collectively provide an answer that is as good as the answer of the smartest person (Surowiecki, 2005, p. 11).

Interestingly, Surowiecki's (2005) *The Wisdom of Crowds,* ends with an example of deliberative democracy. The target of many criticisms, deliberation perpetuates an "unrealistic conception of civic-mindedness," and the idealistic notion that those uneducated on the issues

may gain some magical insight through deliberation (p. 261). Citizens have many distractions and may or may not be inclined to devout time and energy into understanding. The wisdom of crowds is not necessarily a prescription for complex cognitive problems, but Surowiecki assumes the wisdom of crowds is an act of democracy because it diminishes the ability of a few individuals to make decisions for everyone. Democracy helps people solve the social and economic issues of the day because "the democratic experience is an experience of not getting everything you want" (Surowiecki, 2005, p. 271). That is, democracy is a form of public participation which produces an environment of compromise and acceptance for what the crowd decides.

Critics of public engagement state that there is no need for civic participation in a representative democracy; hence why we have elected officials. It is their duty to make policy decisions for us as we have elected them to do so. It should be recognized that a limited political term in office does influence policy decisions. Decisions that best serve constituents or determining what is in the public's interest can conflict with political pressures. It is important to remember, governments often have competing interests of businesses, interest groups, and the public to manage. Having a vote is different than having a say. Public engagement gives citizens the opportunity to have a voice about things that matter to them, as the changing nature of policy and shifting delivery of citizen services unfolds.

Consulting with citizens for the sake of consultation also does not provide historic insights. Besides, consulting with citizens who cannot fully comprehend the complexity of

government processes is perilous; whether it is the average uninformed citizen or interest group with a stake in the outcomes. As noted by Heinrichs (2013) in *The Consulter's Conceit: How Phony Public Consultations Undermine Democracy and the Market*, "[s]pecial interest groups have the ability and incentive to dominate the public consultation process" (cover page). It is noted that often "[p]ublic meetings tend to serve only the most vocal participants, and tend to dissuade others despite the value they might add" (OECD, 2009, p. 101).

Concern for public input and political gain can, and does, happen at the same time. Although there are many merits of public engagement, it can be used as a disguise to cover up true intentions of government; governments often provide asymmetrical information so that those not fully involved with complicated policy may not understand connections. Politicians are privy to information regarding policies, and can deceive voters about the true state of happenings. "In the market place people constantly use prices to weigh up the value of different options, but consultations do not deal well with trade-offs" (Heinrichs, 2013, p. 22). There is a tendency to identify wants without considering the trade-offs. These threats recognize the importance of intentions of public consultations; the quality of consultations should be examined, how questions are framed, and what is done with results being at the forefront of effective public engagement.

Alberta proves an interesting example of how increased participatory democratic practices can have an adverse effect. In *Responding to the "New Public": The arrival of strategic communications and managed participation in Alberta*, Kiss (2014) describes the

significance of the "public's demand for increased transparency and participation in politics and policy-making" in Premier Ralph Klein's 1992 reform to government communications in Alberta (p. 26). As previously discussed, government communications has evolved for a variety of reasons, but notably here, providing a consumer-ready strategic communication is a response to the demand of citizens for transparency of the government and a voice in policy decision making.

The political climate of Alberta in the early 1990s, economic realities, and well-informed population increased citizens' desire to influence policy (Kiss, 2014, p. 33-34). To respond to these pressures, newly elected Premier Klein increased the centralized strategic communication of the Public Affairs Bureau in Alberta, established in 1973, to be the strategic communications strong hand of Alberta (Kiss, 2014, p. 31). He commissioned heavy amounts of public opinion research and "substantially increased the frequency and scale of public consultations" in Alberta (Kiss, 2014, p. 38). This revamp included increased access to ministers by media, and the implementation of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in 1995 that was seen as very risky (Kiss, 2014, p. 38).

> Introducing freedom of information legislation can result in embarrassing facts becoming public, making politicians more accessible to the media increases the likelihood of a mistake and controversy; in public consultations participants may make recommendations contrary to party, caucus or cabinet policy. (Kiss, 2014, p. 39)

Kiss (2014) summarizes a historical view of how strategic centralized government communications in a province can influence outcomes that are seemingly "inflation of influence" (p. 44). The result of this overhaul of communications in Alberta was a seemingly responsive government to citizens' expectations of transparency and participation that actually resulted in a strengthening of executive power. Agenda setting and policy decisions were therefore decided by a small number of inner circle individuals (Kiss, 2014, p. 43). Increased strategic communications by government created a less credible or genuine reputation among citizens. This misplaced trust in institutions makes it harder for governments to get citizens to adopt their proposed actions (Kiss, 2014, p. 44).

It appears as if history has repeated itself; former Premier Alison Redford touted similar electoral promises of reform. But as this example demonstrates, "commitments to increased openness and transparency ironically bring about greater adoption of more professional and strategic communication, limiting the consequences of those commitments" (Kiss, 2014, p. 44). As exhibited, open and transparent efforts by government is not sufficient in solving complex issues. Gaining trust among citizens by providing sincere opportunities to work together to solve issues is paramount in building cooperation.

Public engagement research suggests that having a dialogue and collaborative opportunities produces a supportive environment able to genuinely build consensus and foster networks to build coalitions to reach common goals. As there has been a considerable increase in engagement practices in the last decade, it has demonstrated that citizen participation can be

useful (Lenihan, 2012, p. 108). "Deliberative processes have been used in many places with considerable success and have shown that citizens are ready, able and willing to participate" (Lenihan, 2012, p. 108). There are necessary precursors of significant public participation processes that require preparation, but these processes garner considerable results in the preservation of citizens' demands of participation and transparency.

Methodology

The methodology for this Capstone Project is a straightforward comparative analysis of qualitative data analytically collected through individual interviews. First, an explanation of why Alberta's Social Policy Framework was selected for analysis will be discussed. Second, interview reasoning and data collection approaches will be outlined so the reader may understand the approach taken by the researcher. Lastly, comparative analysis using qualitative research methods will be explained.

Why Alberta's Social Policy Framework?

The researcher chose to analyze Alberta's Social Policy Framework for several reasons. Most importantly, this Framework had an extraordinary sample amount of participants engaged which provides a strong model for future public engagement involving social policy; particularly, as governments move from intervention to prevention initiatives to be pro-active in alleviating social problems in the long-term (Wagner, 2014, January 23). This striking amount of participation suggests strengths in engagement strategies used to foster commitment in

government initiatives. As well, the several types of engagement techniques used proved fascinating as there were many ways many people could participate in the process.

A lecture about the engagement process and the Framework from the process's creator ignited interest in this first Canadian provincial Social Policy Framework. The stated amount of bureaucratic and political support for the initiative was appealing. A lecture and interview with Leann Wagner, the designer of *Speak. Share. Thrive.*, proved essential for understanding strengths and weakness of the engagement process for this reflective study. Additionally, as this process was very open and inclusive, there is comprehensive data online for analyzing engagement process outcomes. The Building Families and Communities Act established in 2014 proved an interesting connection to fostering the network that was established during the engagement process and is a direct outcome of the Framework.

Researcher Insights

The researcher for this Capstone Project has an interest in public participation and is an advocate for government using these processes especially for the increasingly complex and globalized nature of public policy. For this reason, the researcher has completed IAP2 Certificate in Public Participation, which is the recognized industry standard for practitioners. Therefore, the researcher is biased to public engagement practices being a beneficial process. The researcher recognizes there are several limitations to public participation, especially if it is not done properly. There are a number of prerequisites that need to be established before participation processes can be conducted. This includes understanding that each process is individualistic, and

a unique plan must be adopted for each engagement process; there is no standard application of public participation processes. There are prescribed steps that are recognized and if applied properly can provide project facilitators with best outcomes.

Interviews and Data Collection Method

The first step of methodology was deciding what information the researcher wanted to understand. Experience can often be the most telling way to understand a process. It was recognized that relying on purely quantitative data would not identify gaps in the process as only success was conveyed. It was accepted that qualitative insight would give a more meaningful analysis; interviews were decided to be the method of data collection because of access and analysis objectives. Gaining ethics approval from the University of Calgary in order to conduct interviews to allow for firsthand insight was important for research documentation. This involved a three hour online course and application process.

Interviews were conducted from April – June 2014 and included interviewees ranging from academics, consultants, public participation practitioners, as well as those involved with Alberta's Social Policy Framework inside government and in private and non-profit settings. Interviewees were selected through network contacts. They were asked to sign a confidentiality agreement where they had the option of disclosing their contact information for use in this Capstone Project. Data was collected through researcher developed interview questions that were typed up during the interview so detailed insight could be captured. Table 3 describes the basic

list of questions asked. Some knowledge gained was based on unprepared questions centred on interviewees stated experiences.

1.	Can you please tell me your involvement in Speak. Share. Thrive.?
2.	I am looking to determine best practices and gaps in the engagement process so I may make policy recommendations based on my findings. Are there any techniques that you noticed did or did not work well as a mechanism to collect citizens input to be reflected in the Social Policy Framework?
3.	Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this engagement process?
4.	Can I contact you in the future if I have any further questions?
5.	Do you have any contacts that you could introduce me to that may relate to my research?

Table 3—Interview Questions

Comparative Analysis in Qualitative Research

The methodology used for analyzing the qualitative research was a basic comparative analysis. A comparative analysis recognizes similarities and differences in data and associates that data to find parallels. Interviewing the engagement process initiator, someone from the business sector, and someone from the non-profit sector who participated in the engagement process provided a holistic view of interviewees' experience. Leann Wagner, the creator of *Speak. Share. Thrive.* and the resulting Framework, is the Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives for Human Services. Admittedly, findings were concentrated around Leann Wagner's stated gaps in the interview. Interviews were examined and similarities were chosen to develop three best practices and three gaps of the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process.

Interpretation and Limitations

The findings of this study show a very strong correlation between engagement process outcomes and resulting policy. Interestingly, some predictions about the process were not validated. For example, creators did not hear unexpected insight from participants. Identified gaps of the engagement process were foreseeable; the following discussed findings suggest limitations many public engagement processes face. Shortcomings of the approach of interviews are numerous. In this context, there is not much incentive for the interviewee to be dishonest, but clearly their biases and experiences about public engagement processes, and the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* process in particular, is exhibited. This study could have been more in depth to include more interviews and a deeper analysis of the quantitative and qualitative processes, possibly fit for a thesis.

Findings

Best Practices

This project was an exceptional example of public engagement based on the amount of participation, the thorough project planning and communication, as well as the capacity building among communities. The resulting policy is the first of its kind in Canada, and exhibits strengths in numerous areas. Those include the project development, connection to community, and transparency and resulting policy shifts.

Project Development

The *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process set the standard for public engagement in Alberta (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). "Community engagement is a core competency of civil servants" (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). Many public engagement initiatives fail to acknowledge that politicians and employees are stakeholders. They are unique groups and engaging them so they are a part of the whole process is important in effective public policy decision making. It is well expressed in public engagement texts; better decisions are made when people are engaged from the beginning. If you involve them right at the start, you have allies (D. Plouffe, personal communication, May 13, 2014). Knowing when and how to influence the policy process for those that are "eager to exert their influence on the public policy development process should approach both the political and bureaucratic sides to start marketing their policy ideas" (Sui, 2014, p. 193).

This is exactly what the Social Policy Framework administrators achieved. Politicians and government staff were engaged in the process, which established them as a stakeholder group; 6,300 employees were engaged in this initiative (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). For this reason, there were several advocates from bureaucrats to politicians. Dave Hancock, former Minister of Alberta Human Services, backed this policy pre-consultation. It showed stakeholders that the engagement process and Framework had strong support. This sponsorship allows policy to move forward and clearly outlined that stakeholders would be a part of the policy formulation process (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Jonathan Denis, a Member of the Legislature Assembly of Alberta, gave a lecture at a Speaker Series event and the University of Calgary, School of Public Policy in Fall 2013. His lecture focused on the Framework, and outcomes realized in the engagement process. He recognized that the public can bring something to the table that government had not thought of. He also noted the importance of partnering with non-profits to stretch tax payers' dollars (Denis, 4 October, 2013).

Timing was an important element of this policy and engagement process. Alison Redford was elected Premier on many social policy premises and had bureaucratic support for the Framework; people were "Alison Redford drunk at the time" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). It was clear to participants that preparation and public service buy-in was present. At one of the engagement meetings, it was noted that Leann Wagner really understood what was going on. "It can happen where you spend time trying to figure out what they are saying but this was like she already knew and people connected with that" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). There was a feeling that the public service really backed this project, and there was a lot of upfront work involved. This contributed to the use of new language between government and the non-profits. There was a language change, and the sector started using the Framework as the language for communicating social issues (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Being brought in at the right time is hard. Project management may put public consultation near the end, but most success is recognized when public engagement is done at the

onset. Sometimes research is enough and you do not need engagement, but recognizing that is important. Often, the necessary value needed for effectiveness is not placed on engagement processes. Project managers think they know what's best—coffee, donuts, and flip charts (D. Plouffe, personal communication, May 13, 2014). The Social Policy Framework initiative started with the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process. As Leann Wagner mentioned in her 2014 lecture, it is important to do your homework. Look to trend setters in the area—like Australia, New Zealand, and the UK—to recognize best practices and not be driven by a "flavour of the month" attitude.

There was engagement directed at the non-profit and business community. A private Senior Policy Analyst interviewed noted that the engagement process was a smart way to get a sense of policy support and if there is an appetite for the imposed changes. She noted the use of engagement at the onset of policy development, which she felt was essential in taking positions seriously before implementing the policy. This discussion lead to business leaders identifying how they contribute to organizations involved in social policy work and what they provide to the community (A. Ruddy, personal communication, May 15, 2014). For the non-profit sector, participants felt as if the government was providing advocates with a voice. At no point did it feel as if the decision was already made (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Connection to Community

By building trust and establishing relationships, genuine engagement and meaningful outcomes can be recognized. This was the founding premise of the *Speak. Share. Thrive.*

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

process. Engagement will come more easily when the process provides opportunities for communities to have their own conversations. Communities need to have tools because government does not have all the answers nor can it solve all the social unrests of their citizens (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). Creators recognized success of their approach would be building up institutions locally—not a dump and run approach or town hall—by giving people tools that they can share with their community (Wagner, 2014, January, 23).

Pam Krause, Executive Director of a local non-profit organization, mentioned that her participation in the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process was the most effective she has ever attended. Leann Wagner was present at her initial meeting for the Social Policy Framework; Leann expressed right from the beginning that the bigger purpose of the engagement process was the relationship building opportunity between government and the non-profit sector in the delivery of services (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Gaining buy-in is often the pinnacle objective of engagement processes. There are many cynics of engagement. Stephen Carter, a consultant with many years of experience working with political agents provides this view. We only engage people for political cover in order to get permission for action (S. Carter, personal communication, May 16, 2014). There is nervousness among business, regulators, and government if the public does not buy-in. This could result in huge consequences for organizations and the economy.

There is value in engaging the public and obtaining social license because it is no longer about majority opinion, just whoever is the loudest. The public is participating in engagement

opportunities and are "way louder with new ways to be heard," which requires finding ways to measure opinion in very diverse groups (C. Hogan, personal communication, May 16, 2014). Fostering these expectations and the outcomes of these voices will be necessary for being proactive and not reactive.

Even if this is the case, buy-in was an objective for this Framework, because without it, it would not be a very effective policy. Leann Wagner recognized that you can write a policy you think would address requirements, but you also need buy-in. This Framework involved 7,000 contract agencies as well as buy-in from other industries. Many people participated in many different ways. This demonstrates there is need and interest in change (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). *Speak. Share. Thrive.* gave the opportunity for pre-existing groups to mobilize their networks (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). Communities working together to help their community is more likely to produce noticeable results (B. Heinrichs, personal communication, April 25, 2014). What the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process was able to accomplish was bringing people together to solve problems and recognizing how to serve Albertans (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). Out of all of the engagement methods used, the community conversations produced the most meaningful outcomes; it facilitated communities to have a conversation and the community felt ownership of it (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

As Pam Krause unwaveringly expressed in her interview, there was a real sense of the emergence of a collaborative relationship between non-profit and government. The sectors' voice was not only being listened to, but it created an atmosphere that provided participants a

substantial role in the policy making process. "It certainly felt like our voice was taken seriously and that people actually participated. It was viewed as a great opportunity" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). She felt as if it was a sincere attempt at engagement which provided improved trust, and there was a lot of interest in participating in the engagement as they gave multiple opportunities for input and ways to do it. Because it was made so easy to give input, "if you didn't engage it was crazy" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Transparency and Establishing Policy Shifts

Connecting with the community is the start of a larger appreciation of how society is organizing itself. "The modern world is a network of coalitions" (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014). Decisions made today require coalitions because problems are complex and take a long time to solve. Education and mobilizing networks to create coalitions will help to address barriers to enact social change (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

It was a rather difficult experience from the inside to deliberate about the data, thoughtfully analyze it, code data to provide rigorous research and make it publically available quickly. The results paid off as "no one said they got it wrong" (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). There is a lot of agreement around what the social issues are, but how to enact change is where the disagreement lies (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). The language around prevention tactics needs to communicate that the issue is society driven, not government driven (B. Heinrichs, personal communication, April 25, 2014). Nothing absolutely "ground breaking" came out of the

consultations, but the causes and root causes of issues explored recognized that prevention is where society is moving (Wagner, 2014, January, 23).

As seen in Table 4, a list of policy shifts was developed for Alberta's Social Policy Framework. These shifts recognize the importance of prevention models, government working as a partner with communities and organizations, and the use of policy to provide tools, not simply mandated rules. The *Speak. Share. Thrive.* process helped Alberta Human Services to identify what was not working well, and how they can reorganize resources to provide more effective outcomes. What facilitators recognized was that government was far away from the people which means they had a hard time understanding the community. Establishing a connection to the community would be the lifeline needed to understanding issues to address them. This way they can go where the conversations are happening which will affirm if they are doing things right (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

THE **SCHOOL**
OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Shifts in Social Policy		
	Less of...	More of...
FOCUS	Policy and delivery are often crisis-oriented	Policy balances prevention and intervention
PURPOSE	Policy addresses symptoms and deficiencies	Policy supports citizens by providing the resources and competencies for success
GOVERNMENT ROLE	Government is a service provider, funder, and legislator	Government is an influencer, convener, and partner
CONNECTIVITY	Social policy is viewed as silos of need and service	Social policy emphasizes the integration and coordination of resources
USE	Policy is a tool to control and regulate behaviour	Policy is a tool to empower, facilitate, and create opportunity
MEASURES OF SUCCESS	Focus on inputs and rules	Focus on outcomes, quality, values, and dignity

Table 4—Source: Alberta Government, 2013, p. 17

An outcome of this engagement process recognized that current service delivery needed to be reorganized. Moving forward, Alberta Human Services have disbanded their longstanding regional family delivering services, identified as a complicated institution. It was recognized that this service was a problem, but still provided lots of value. The solution established the family and community engagement councils to provide tools communities can use to help government pay attention to the issues faced by communities (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014). "A natural outcome of the Social Policy Framework was recognizing that a community can be useful in understanding some of the issues that are not well defined" (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

Alberta Human Services wanted the most transparent and accountable processes, even when open government practices are lagging. Open data mechanisms are being put in place so people can draw their own conclusions (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). There is huge incentive to get information out as soon as possible and correcting missed information; this implies an unprecedented level of openness (C. Hogan, personal communication, May 16, 2014). *Speak. Share. Thrive.* left all online engagement up, was monitored to provide timely answers, and put up data collected nearly instantaneously. This provided a strong commitment by administrators to being accountable and transparent to participants.

Identified Gaps

Public engagement campaigns are often faced with issues of citizen representativeness in policy and timeline limitations. In a political environment, timelines are usually present and can present pressure on intended results. The resulting Social Policy Framework lacks clarity and future direction. This could be because evaluation of the policy is lacking. As well, significant issues around Aboriginal engagement and representation among populations utilizing social programs is an issue without a clear solution.

Policy Representation and Timeline

The use of public engagement processes has surpassed polling techniques in the quest to understand things about the public. According to Corey Hogan, an Account Director at Hill + Knowlton Strategies, this is a good outcome of public engagement trends. Polling was superficial, less qualitative, and often inaccurate; public engagement will lead to better

government policy as it is usually derived at the policy formulation stage (C. Hogan, personal communication, May 16, 2014).

The Social Policy Framework intended to gain buy-in and representation for all Albertans. The resulting policy tends to identify vulnerable populations and their advocates in the desired social policy outcomes (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). Perhaps vulnerable populations benefit the most from social policy initiatives, but the Social Policy Framework does not necessarily provide holistic social advantages for Albertans. As the framework objective defined, the weakness is conveyed in the resulting policy not being demonstrative of all Albertans.

Leann Wagner noted that the "framework may not speak to those Albertans who think government should be smaller; that social policy is only meant for emergency circumstances, not to stand on quality of life" (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). She is worried that the policy might not have spoken effectively to this group of people (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). One recognized limitation of public engagement is that there is a participation bias (S. Carter, personal communication, May 16, 2014). There is a silent majority, but the vocal minority is grounded in the silent majority. There are too many expectations for everyone to participate; the role of the silent majority is to simply allow action (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

Concerns around policy representativeness and effectiveness should mention the limitation of time, which is a typical constraint in public participation initiatives. The *Speak. Share. Thrive.* process was fast; input from June – July 2012 was drafted for continued engagement until the end of November (Alberta Government, 2013, Engagement Statistics).

This time frame limits potential engagement as advertising started at the time of engagement. A longer time frame may have allowed for a bigger sample size that could have produced a more representative population. "You will miss people and then you have to admit that you didn't have a representative sample" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Lack of Clarity and Continued Engagement

Participants did not want to talk about the trade-offs. Contributors were not at that point yet; there was a lack of wanting to discuss roles in achieving goals, especially among the non-profit sector. Change and uncertainty surrounded the non-profits' role in improvement of social services delivery. There was avoidance in talking about the role of non-profits because they thought that implementation meant they would have to increase service delivery or that they would not receive funding (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014). There was a lack of trust present in this context, but this is a founding part of what people believe roles are— government and non-profit—in Canadian society. That is the role of state, civil society, and family, which is especially conventional in Alberta (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

What does it really mean? The question that is unanswered. The vague language used in the resulting policy proved clarity was lacking. How the language used in the Framework could be interpreted is that "it could go either way" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). One interpretation is that government is letting communities take care of the social policy issues with no extra funding from the government. Alternatively, the language is vague enough

that it could imply that government is providing the tools and resources necessary for implementation. It is noted that the vague language is not conducive to what funding shifts are currently happening in the sector (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014).

Additionally, it appears the framework has lost some momentum. They are working on policies that are a part of the framework, but the connection is not communicated. There is not a clear view of what is happening now; there are not any "new brave frontiers" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). Project development was very strong, but evaluation of the project is lacking. That could be why there is no real understanding of what the future of this policy means. Establishing an evaluation of the policy outcomes with communicated results is needed.

Aboriginal Consultation

There is an overrepresentation of Aboriginal population exhibiting social issues which needs to be addressed (Wagner, 2014, January, 23). The number one challenge for administrators of *Speak. Share. Thrive.* was engagement with the First Nations. The targeted Aboriginal groups found it hard to participate. Surprisingly, they prefer processes that are less open. They want to be engaged as they always have been. This first requires facilitators to go to the Grand Chief, then the council, and then through established community conversations (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

According to Leann Wagner, *Speak. Share. Thrive.* facilitators and community advocates recognize that the Aboriginal population is highly represented in social issues, yet the challenge

of engaging this population to have conversations around policy issues is halting progress. They are Albertans, but there is a fundamental difference in how government and society organize themselves and First Nation people organize their communities. Open data and varied use of engagement techniques is great for engaging some populations; are they the right tools given how Aboriginal people understand policy? There is a lack of trust and an ultimate difference in understanding of what engagement facilitators are trying to achieve (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

This is not an area of struggle just for the public sector; all sectors recognize that Aboriginals are overrepresented in social issues, and there is still little understanding on how to address it. "We have to figure it out; we have to engage with them" (P. Krause, personal communication, June 25, 2014). There are so many ways of engaging the public now, but getting people to pay attention is another limitation. It may be that the Aboriginal population suffers from engagement fatigue. There is a clear barrier to engagement, and an absolute solution is not readily accepted.

Policy Implications, Consultation, Communication, and Implementation

Policy Options

There are several public policy options that government can implement to increase likelihood of success. "Public engagement is a condition of effective governance" not just a preferred motion that must be accomplished (OECD, 2009, p. 208). It appears that the growing public agenda of government does not match citizen expectations. By providing opportunities for

public to be engaged with government plans, a renewed relationship can be achieved. The policy options set forth are not compulsory recommendations, but rather options that should be considered in addressing gaps presented. These include addressing barriers, providing a more representative participation in policy outcomes, and establishing an institutionalized method for engagement. These options carry their own limitations but should be considered among future directives.

Address Barriers

According to the OECD the biggest barriers that face engagement are cultural, socio-economic, physical, and other (which is defined around timing of engagement activities or lack of time and energy). This includes language and public awareness, lack of faith in government, and "low confidence in their own ability to express themselves" (OECD, 2009, p. 49). To address these barriers, government needs to create an atmosphere that provides people access to participate if they desire. This would include decreasing limitations that people face "(e.g. distance, time, language, access)" and "building capacity, skills, and knowledge to participate effectively" (OECD, 2009, p. 49).

Understanding why people are not participating is the greatest obstacle to overcome. Whether it is low interest in the policy, little trust in the institution or what will be done with participants' contribution, lack of intrinsic motivation or absence of satisfaction with processes presented, addressing these motivations can be the key to increased participation.

Part of the solution lies in understanding how to design public participation around people's busy lives. Another piece of the puzzle lies in raising professional standards and quality of participation processes. It is in this last area that evaluation, an essential element of ongoing learning and continuous quality improvement, can play a major role. (OECD, 2009, p. 55)

The most obvious barrier in this engagement process stems from an absence of a strategy for engaging the Aboriginal population, especially considering they are among the highest of users of social programing. Facilitators of *Speak. Share. Thrive.* tried to use the same mechanisms for engaging all Albertans and this was not effective. By acknowledging this, developing a plan for engagement, and addressing the barriers to their participation in the process, increased participation among Aboriginal populations will be more likely.

Another barrier to implementing the policy is the lack of follow-through. There seems to be little evaluation or continued communication for this Framework. Providing that new social initiatives are being developed, it is unclear if these stem from the Framework; it is not communicated well and connections are not being made.

Citizens Reference Panel

Concerns around policy representation and biases among interviewees were present. It should be people outside of the organization doing the consultation to omit government bias and bottom line outcomes (B. Heinrichs, personal communication, April 25, 2014). Bias tends to increase when you have community leaders giving engagement too, because there is a view that

they are just saying what government wants them to say (B. Heinrichs, personal communication, April 25, 2014). Recognizing that people do not trust the institution of government does not mean that government should not be administering public engagement. It could also be argued that the private sector does not have the necessary knowledge of the bureaucracy or service delivery side either. This then requires them to artificially understand a situation, project, or concept which could increase time and resources necessary for engagement.

Engaging a diversified population of Albertans will provide a more statistically valid sample increasing likelihood of its representative success. By examining the design and recruitment process and taking measures to retrieve a representative sample of the population, intended results are more likely to be realized. Expanding samples to provide a more randomized engagement technique will aid in representation of Albertans in social policy initiatives.

One way to achieve this could be instituting a citizens' reference panel; it is a policy option that establishes a representative sample of randomly selected citizens. This option could provide policy makers with the preferred outcome of a policy demonstrative of all Albertans as representation of a variety of social policy desires is more likely achieved. A civic lottery mechanism randomly selects citizens to convene about certain issues. This increases the success of a desired representative sample. MASS LBD is an advisory firm that has demonstrated success using this model in several Canadian jurisdictions. The emphasis is not placed solely on public engagement but also includes a public learning aspect. This organization recognizes the wide ranges of expertise citizens can provide in policy; where policy recommendations are

presented after trade-offs are considered. This could be an excellent addition to the family and community engagement councils where healthy mixes of self-selected participants are coupled with civic lottery respondents (MASS LBD, n.d., engagement).

Institutionalization

Many feel it is in one's civic duty to vote and be active citizens. Interestingly, Leann Wagner acknowledged citizen apathy as a real public policy problem. She appreciates that people will not read the newspaper, but voting is the "minimum of the social contract" (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014). She believes Canada should adopt mandatory voting. Public engagement is a discussion, and it is appreciated that not everyone wants to be involved in that discussion, but it doesn't mean that we do not want people to be involved in the discussion for us. Someone might make their voting choice based on what people are talking about in the public forum.

Stephen Carter, Vice President, National Director of Campaign Strategy at Hill + Knowlton Canada, believes that mandatory voting would not be an easy public policy to implement in Canada but we should establish incentivized voting (S. Carter, personal communication, May 16, 2014). What does this conclude about our current voting requirements and public engagement initiatives? The OECD (2009) places high regards to engaging citizens for the future of civic participation and public institutions.

High quality inclusive public engagement is important in a modern representative

democracy. Engaging and empowering citizens to become involved in decision making

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

not only contributes to better policy outcomes and improved public services by tapping

reservoirs of experience and creativity, but on a more fundamental level, also helps build

civic capacity and trust in government. (p. 186)

One option is to institutionalize public engagement policies. This could be legislation to

ensure public engagement activities are included in policy planning. It is proving successful in

other jurisdictions. This is at times inflexible and can be viewed as unethical, as citizens should

have a choice in engagement (B. Heinrichs, personal communication, April 25, 2014). Outside

of legislative requirements, making public engagement an institutional practice of government is

being presented as essential to governments increasingly faced with inclusivity and transparency

demands. "Only by institutionalising these practices will we rebuild trust in our governing

institutions and transform what it means to be a democracy" (OECD, 2009, p. 232).

Recently, in the United States, public disclosure and public comment mediums have been

legislated for regulatory initiatives. It is appreciated that officials simply cannot have complete

information about everything. As outlined in Cass Sunstein's (2013) book, *Simpler: The Future*

of Government, the public can supply a more comprehensive insight to improve new and existing

processes (p. 4). Sharing information can help improve processes as "knowledge and scrutiny

encourage both individuals and institutions to perform better" (Sunstein, 2013, p. 79). The

Obama administration has implemented the Open Government Initiative for information

disclosure. The initiative allows for those impacted by the disclosed information, namely private

businesses, to do something with the data that will improve upon their processes (Sunstein, 2013,

p. 81). Proposed government regulations are mostly put forth to the public "to identify the likely consequences of decisions in advance, to reduce the risk of error, and correct mistakes after they are made" (Sunstein, 2013, p. 81). Regulations cannot be finalized until they have been put forth for public participation and an open exchange of information has occurred (Sunstein, 2013, p. 81). Accountability and improving people's lives are the main drivers of this initiative (Sunstein, 2013, p. 218).

A counterargument to this initiative may be that it is a timely administrative function for the government to undertake for every regulation, the job of our elected officials. The complex competing interests government must manage appreciates that not all decisions can be solely made in the interest of the public. This pro-active position recognizes government intervention to correct market failures can, in turn, result in government failure. This is one interesting example of how institutionalizing public participation could be a possible solution in mitigating or preventing failures from the onset.

Conclusion

Sui (2014) appreciates a policy is successful if it completes objectives:

A good public policy is defined by its achievement of the greatest public good. To achieve this, a policy must balance public interests and an accountability framework; accomplish its impacts as planned, and ensure these impacts are cost-effective and just; and balanced short- and long-term considerations. (p. 192)

**THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY**

Did the Alberta Government practice public participation techniques that exhibit strong outcomes and what identified gaps can be addressed in order to increase success of future initiatives of Alberta's Social Policy Framework? In the context of their mandate, timeline, and departmental objectives, the Alberta Human Services achieved every objective set out at the initial discussion of the Social Policy Framework. It built a case for the existence of the Ministry of Human Services. The goals outlined by project initiators of what they wanted to achieve at the end of the engagement process was accomplished. They wanted to leave previous reputations of Alberta and government being bad behind. They had hoped that many people would endorse it as a community framework. Creators wanted to raise awareness. By these measures, the Alberta Social Policy Framework was successful at achieving desired outcomes (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014).

Leann Wagner noted that social change takes a long time. Looking to history, we can see examples of how long social change can take before it is generally accepted, for example, women's rights, civil rights, and Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender, Queer movements have taken decades (L. Wagner, personal communication, June 4, 2014). For this policy to be truly successful, a lasting impact in the next decade or two should be seen, just as it is stated in the policy.

This will require gaps to be acknowledged and addressed. It seems as if the policy has finished and continued support to foster the connections made and ground gained could dissipate. Time will provide insight into desired social change outcomes. In the meantime, Alberta Human

Services has every opportunity to tackle the big limitations by providing clarity around ongoing objectives, continuously engaging more Albertans, and finding strategies to tap into Aboriginal networks by riding the coattails of the success of this public engagement initiative.

The disadvantages of conducting the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* engagement process is that it has set expectations that may or may not be kept. This extensive amount of public engagement has set the bar for future social policy changes. There is an expectation that the Alberta Government will provide a similar level of engagement for future social policy initiatives, especially among social serving agencies. This could be an advantage, but given the current political climate in Alberta, this expectation may no longer be of priority among new government. Given that this was a mandate from the former Premier Alison Redford, who is currently surrounded in irresponsible spending scandals, support from the bureaucracy and changing elected officials may not align with the mandate of Alberta's Social Policy Framework.

This analysis provided that there still exists a lack of clarity in the overarching policy with several possible interpretations of its outcomes and how the policy will be implemented. Most notably here, the lack of clarity exists around communicating that several ongoing social policy initiatives, for example Alberta's homelessness plan and child intervention practices, are an outcome of this Framework, as connections are not being communicated. That is, current initiatives of this Framework appear to be separate and stand-alone policies. Continued engagement around social policy outcomes, including providing strategies for Aboriginal consultation, must be addressed. This could be mitigated by communicating connections of

social initiatives as well as making a practice to continually evaluate the efforts of continued engagement. Evaluation of outcomes are either lacking or not being properly communicated. For the policy shifts outlined in the Framework to be impactful, they must continually be evaluated and communicated so that the policy's desired outcomes can be achieved.

Findings of this analysis of the *Speak. Share. Thrive.* process and outcomes provide that the process was a worthwhile one. The process did provide several advantages, many of which appear to have potential long-lasting benefits. Social serving agencies felt that the engagement process was genuine; the goal to gain rapport among providers of social programs was achieved. *Speak. Share. Thrive.* provided inclusivity though several engagement opportunities and ways to participate, as well as transparency as outcomes were public and questions were addressed. This build trust among participants and these partnerships were a very important element in the success of change around implementing social policy. Just by simply having the conversation, a connection to the community was established and common language around the Framework was being used by community practitioners. Education around policy shifts, moving from intervention to prevention strategies, and listening to participants proved a strong tactic for gaining support for this Framework.

The future of public engagement in Canada will affect the established institutions of government and business. It will govern practices because finding new ways to adapt to citizens' input will be imperative in the success of maintaining citizens' expectations of government. Looking to the model used to develop Alberta's Social Policy Framework may be useful in

future initiatives as it may benefit social policy outcomes across a variety of different directives as recognized networks can be fostered to improve policy outcomes. This requires the public to understand the tough choices faced by decision makers, and requires governments to work with citizens to solve complex issues together.

References

Alberta Government. (2013, February 28). Engagement Statistics for Alberta's Social Policy

    Framework. *Speak. Share. Thrive*. Retrieved April 30, 2014, from

    http://socialpolicyframework.alberta.ca/files/documents/spf_engagement_stats_0.pdf

Alberta Government. (2013, February). Alberta's Social Policy Framework. *Alberta Government.*

    Retrieved April 30, 2014, from http://socialpolicyframework.alberta.ca/files/documents/

    ahs-nonannotatedfrmwrk-webfinal.pdf

Alberta Government. (2013, March 5). PowerPoint Presentation-Overview of Alberta's Social

    Policy Framework. *Alberta Government*. Retrieved April 10, 2014, from

    http://www.socialpolicyframework.alberta.ca/Document/PowerPoint_Presentation_Over

    view_Albertas_Social_Policy_Framework

Alberta Government. (2014). Social Policy Framework 101. *Main Page*. Retrieved April 16,

    2014, from http://socialpolicyframework.alberta.ca/Frequently_Asked_Questions_0

Alberta Human Services. (2013). Alberta Human Services Annual Report 2012-2013 Highlights.

    Alberta Human Services. Retrieved June 25, 2014, from http://www.humanservices

    .alberta.ca/ documents/2012-13-human-services-highlights.pdf

Alberta Human Services. (2012). Human Services Annual Report 2011-2012. *Alberta Human*

    Services. Retrieved June 25, 2014, from http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/

    documents/2011-12-Human-Services-Annual-Report.pdf

Alberta Human Services. (2014, March 18). Legislation. *Alberta Human Services*. Retrieved

    April 10, 2014, from http://humanservices.alberta.ca/department/fcec-legislation.html

Alberta Queen's Printer. (2014, December 11). Alberta Queen's Printer. *Building Families and*

    Community Act Chapter B-7.5. Retrieved April 10, 2014, from

    http://www.qp.alberta.ca/546.cfm?page=b07p5_13.cfm&leg_type=fall

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). *A Ladder of Citizen Participation.* Journal of the American Institute of

    Planners, 35(4), 216-224. Retrieved June 29, 2014, from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080

    /01944366908977

CAG Consultants. (n.d.). *Participation: A Theoretical Context*. CAG Consultants. Retrieved

    June 27, 2014, from http://www.cagconsultants.co.uk/resources

Denis, J. (Minister of Justice and Solicitor General) (2013, October 4). Social Policy Framework.

    Speaker Series. Lecture conducted from University of Calgary, School of Public Policy,

    Calgary.

Dunleavy, J. (2009). The Value of Ordinary Expertise: Collaborative Public Involvement.

    Education Canada, *49*(1), 19-22. Retrieved February 10, 2014, from www.cea.ace.ca

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for*

    qualitative research. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.

Heinrichs, B. (2013). The Consulter's Conceit: How Phony Public Consultations Undermine

    Democracy and the Market. *Manning Foundation for Democratic Education*, *1*, 1-48.

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

IAF. (2013). About IAF. *International Association of Facilitators.* Retrieved June 30, 2014, from

http://iaf-world.org/AboutIAF/AboutIAF.aspx

IAP2. (n.d.). *About IAP2.* International Association for Public Participation. Retrieved June 29,

2014, from http://www.iap2.org/?page=A3

IAP2. (n.d.). *IAP2: Good public participation results in better decisions*. International

Association for Public Participation. Retrieved June 29, 2014, from http://www.iap2.org/

IAP2. (n.d.). *IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation*. International Association for Public

Participation. Retrieved July 1, 2014, from http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/

resource/resmgr/imported/spectrum.pdf

Karkin, N. (2013). *Web 2.0 Tools for Public Participation through Government Websites.*

Gestión y Política Pública, Electronic Government (Special Issue 2013), 309-332.

Retrieved April 24, 2014, from Electronic Government Guest editors: J. Ramón Gil-

García and J. Ignacio Criado SPECIAL ISSUE 2013 Electronic Government

Documentos de trabajo Revistas LIBROS Fondo editorial Libros Novedades Revistas

www.LibreriaCide.com www.gestionypoliticapublica.cide.edu

Kiss, S. (2014). *Responding to the "New Public": The arrival of strategic communications and

managed participation in Alberta*. Canadian Public Administration, 57(1), 26-48.

Lenihan, D. G. (2012). Rescuing Policy: The Case for Public Engagement. Ottawa, Ont.: Public

Policy Forum.

Lingard, L., Albert, M., & Levinson, W. (2008). Grounded theory, mixed methods, and action

    research. *BMJ*, *337*(47). Retrieved April 28, 2014, from http://www.bmj.com/content

    /337/bmj.39602.690162.47

MASS LBP. (n.d.). MASS LBP: Reinventing public consultation. Engagement. Retrieved May

    27, 2014, from http://www.masslbp.com/engagement.php

McNutt, K. (2014). Public engagement in the Web 2.0 era: Social collaborative technologies in a

    public sector context. *Canadian Public Administration*, 57(1), 49-70.

OECD. (2009). *Focus on Citizen: Public Engagement for Better Policy and Services.* Paris:

    Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development.

Public Policy Forum. (n.d.). *Public Engagement | Public Policy Forum*. Public Policy Forum.

    Retrieved May 21, 2014, from http://www.ppforum.ca/engagement-community

Secretary-General of the OECD. (2009). *Focus on Citizens Public Engagement for Better Policy*

    and Services. Paris: OECD.

Siu, B. (2014). *Developing Public Policy: A Practical Guide.* Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Stroick, S. M. (1998). *Public Involvement and Community Planning the Redesign of Services for*

    Children and Families in Southwestern Alberta. Ottawa: National Library of Canada.

Sunstein, C. R. (2013). *Simpler: the future of government.* New York City: Simon & Schuster.

Surowiecki, J. (2005). *The wisdom of crowds: why the many are smarter than the few and how*

    collective wisdom shapes business, economies, societies, and nations (First Anchor

    Books Edition ed.). New York: Anchor Books.

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Taras, D., & Waddell, C. (2012). *How Canadians communicate IV media and politics*.

    Edmonton: AU Press.

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (2012, April 1). Consultation and Citizenship Engagement

    Policy Requirements. *Communications Policy of the Government of Canada*. Retrieved

    April 10, 2014, from http://tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12316&section=text

Wagner, L. (Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives, Human Services) (2014, January 23).

    Alberta's Social Policy Framework. *Social Policy*. Lecture conducted from University of

    Calgary, Calgary.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY | THE **SCHOOL** OF **PUBLIC POLICY**

Appendices

Engagement Statistics for Alberta's Social Policy Framework

Alberta Government

Total Participation
(June 7 to November 30, 2012)

Volume of Participation Activity

59,600
(e.g., tweets, site visits, community conversations)

Number of People Reached

31,300

Total Community Discussions

7,250 Participants

59 Locations

387
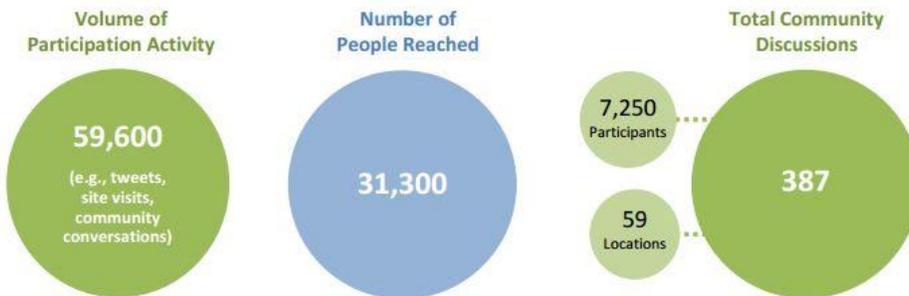
Online Participation at socialpolicy.alberta.ca
(June 7 to November 16, 2012)

27,479 ······· New (Unique) Visitors

20,371 Returning Visitors

49,057 Total Site Visits

5,466 — Surveys Completed
170 — Library Submissions
135 — Wiki Entries
169 — User Comments

20,130 Discussion Kit
10,733 SPF 101
9,143 Blog Tab
6,707 Library
5,789 Public Wiki Home Page
1,652 Facilitation Guide
958 Staff Wiki Home
907 Grant Application

Site Views
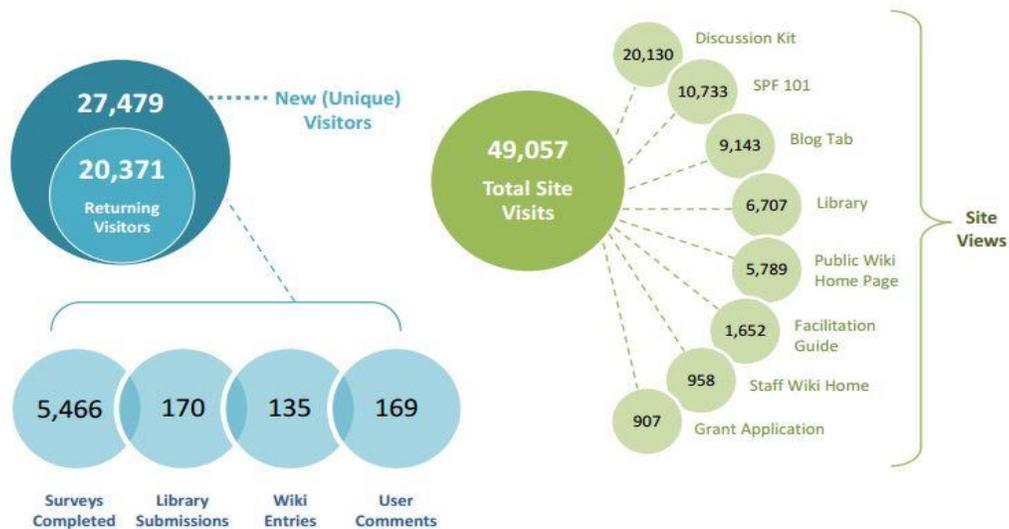
Appendix 1—Source: Alberta Government, 2013, Engagement Statistics

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

KEY EVENTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Time Line

Antiquity to the present
Collaborative decision-making processes are used in tribal cultures.

1600s to the present
Post-colonization, Canadians informally collaborate to solve problems in their local communities.

Late 19th century to the present
With the birth of community planning, Canadians are mobilized to address urban social welfare problems and participate in community development initiatives, tenants' and taxpayers' associations, and cooperative unions.

1930s
Both the public and nongovernmental sectors in Canada conduct public involvement initiatives to deal with social and economic crises.

Late 1940s to mid-1960s
The rational, scientific, centralized approach to planning used during World War II is adopted by governments in the United States and Canada to address physical and social post-war needs. Public involvement in planning wanes as planning is centralized in government and conducted by 'experts.'

Mid-1960s
Canadian census data links high levels of illiteracy to poverty, after which citizens demand more involvement in planning to meet social needs. Public dissatisfaction with consumerism and life in a technological society results in community protests against 'big business and big government.' Citizen unrest in the United States is much more 'violent, political and racially tense' than protests in Canada.

Late 1960s
In response to urban riots, the American government formally involves citizens in planning for social needs by legislating the requirement for public involvement in federal antipoverty programs and grant programs intended to promote model cities, new town development, community development, and urban development.

1968
Public involvement in planning is legislated in the United Kingdom through the *Town and Country Planning Act of 1968.*

Appendix 2—Source: Stroick, 1998, p. 72

THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

KEY EVENTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Time Line

1969

In response to rising public concerns about the state of the environment, the United States legislates 'public consultation' as a requirement of environmental decision-making through the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.*

1972

The receipt of public comment through quasi-judicial public hearings is legislated in Canada for environmental impact assessments conducted as part of the *Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process.*

1970s

Legislated requirements for public involvement in environmental decision-making spur the growth of public involvement as a formal practice in Canada and the United States.

1980s

The neoconservative politics and entrepreneurial governance of the Reagan era limits public involvement in government decision-making to the legal minimum in the United States. In Canada, despite the parallel presence of a Conservative government in Ottawa, public consultation in government decision-making continues and begins to expand to include the public in bona fide participatory decision-making processes.

1992

The Conservative era in American politics ends with the election of Bill Clinton, after which federal support for public involvement increases.

1993

The World Bank's *Operational Directive 4.01 on Environmental Assessment* requires affected groups and local nongovernmental organizations to be 'informed and consulted in a meaningful way' as part of any environmental impact assessment that receives World Bank funding.

1996

The National Academy of Sciences in the United States declares that environmental risk characterization requires both technical analyses and 'deliberative processes' involving interested and affected parties.

Appendix 2 continued—Source: Stroick, 1998, p. 73