

## Consultations

There have been a number of examples in the last three years of issues that have been pursued by TOL in ways that do not take full advantage of public input.

Public input should be sought when new ideas are being considered by TOL. The public should also be given the opportunity to provide input into issues on an iterative basis during the planning phase rather than waiting until the draft phase when it is much more difficult to incorporate suggestions. This sort of **authentic engagement of the public** would allow TOL to benefit from the community's ideas and experience. In addition this sort of approach would increase "buy in" by the public.

Failure to adequately engage the public leads to suspicion (when the public does not know what is going on but hears that something is happening "behind closed doors" there is a tendency to assume the worst). When ideas are brought forward after a great deal of planning the public often sees the proposals as a **"done deal"** with little opportunity for change. This leads to either cynicism about the process or to confrontation between the public and TOL.

In addition to the Fort Langley waterfront example (where the public was involved in a limited way but has been left to wonder what is happening since) examples include:

- 1) Fire Hall Lake The public was not consulted. Filling the lake was presented as a "done deal". This led to confrontation and finally abandonment by TOL.
- 2) WMP Although a stakeholder group was formed it was handpicked by TOL without the public knowing what was going on. The stakeholder group was not in touch with the wider public. When recommendations came forward the public was surprised by some (notably metering) and a furor arose. Involving the public in a more open way earlier in the process would have shaped and improved the WMP and might have prevented some of the backlash. The public consultation that TOL is pursuing this fall is too late in the process to adequately guide the plan.
- 3) Trinity Western area development. SRES continues to hear that development proposals are being prepared for the area from Trinity Western to the future 216 street interchange with Highway 1. Despite the fact that much of this area lies within the ALR and despite public assets being involved (notably the Salmon River and its Watershed) we have been told that "confidentiality" prevents TOL from discussing what is going on.
- 4) Tree bylaw for Brookswood While TOL did consult the community initially the stakeholder group was not consulted during the subsequent year of planning. TOL made substantial changes to what the stakeholder group recommended resulting in a plan that pleased no one. Iterative involvement of the stakeholders as planning progressed was needed but was not done.
- 5) Dixon's Pit Environmentally valuable public land sold without involvement of the public in the decision.