

An aerial photograph of Baltimore, Maryland, showing the harbor, city buildings, and a large glass-walled building in the foreground. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue diagonal overlay on the left side.

ICMA
conference

BALTIMORE
104th Annual Conference
SEPTEMBER 23-26 **2018**

Social Media: Where Residents and Local Government Unite

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#ICMA2018

Social media defined

Social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds.

Why not use social media?

❖ Authoritarian Objections

- Citizens who organize can disrupt the state and challenge authority
- “The worst menace to society” – Turkish President Erdogan

❖ Bureaucratic Objections

- Interferes with decision-making
- Devalues technical expertise

❖ Democratic Objections

- Citizens not capable of reason
- Lack of civility poisons social relationships

Why use social media?

- ❖ It is where the people are
- ❖ Access new voices, potentially different than the voices heard in live settings
- ❖ Promote city/county initiatives, projects, accomplishments
- ❖ Disseminate information rapidly to stakeholders
- ❖ Open Government Directive/Open Government Partnership
- ❖ Web 1.0 vs. Web 2.0

Potential benefits of social media

- ❖ **could be transformational for democracy and transparency**” (Zavattaro & Bryer, 2016).
- ❖ **“transforms the way government and constituents interact”** (Manoharan, 2014)
- ❖ **“provides new capabilities and opportunities to work with the public in collaboration, co-creation or oversight”** (Howard, 2016)
- ❖ **“If governments are not engaging in social media, they are essentially ceding influence and power”** (Alec J. Ross, senior innovation advisor to Secretary of State H. Clinton).
- ❖ Government agencies have started incorporating social media into their overall communication strategies (e.g. proactive vs. reactive).
- ❖ The practice - regulatory challenges.

Risks and opportunities

Risks	Opportunities
Spreading Information Quickly (half truths, attacks, complete erroneous) – Information and Availability Cascades	Spreading Information Quickly (corrections, promotions, events, calls to action)
Mobilizing People Quickly for Civic Action – Smart Mobs (e.g. crime and riot mobs)	Mobilizing People Quickly for Civic Action – Smart Mobs (e.g. disaster response)
Lowered Costs of Participation (democracy bubble; low quality participation; unknown credibility)	Lowered Costs of Participation (easier for citizens to engage with each other and with government) e.g. Wiki Government and Patents; smart phone apps
Increased Need for Staff to Monitor Social Media	Reduced Production Costs of Participation
Ambiguous Legal Standards for Public Record and Increased Expectations for Transparency (diminished confidentiality)	Increased Transparency
Reduced control of message (internal and external)	Increased avenues for delivering unfiltered content (authenticity)
Creativity without Strategy	Strategically Creative (or Creatively Strategic) http://youtu.be/igTH3B9Bfqc

A story of civic engagement

[Imagine Your Perfect Place]

A story of civic engagement



A story of civic engagement



A story of civic engagement

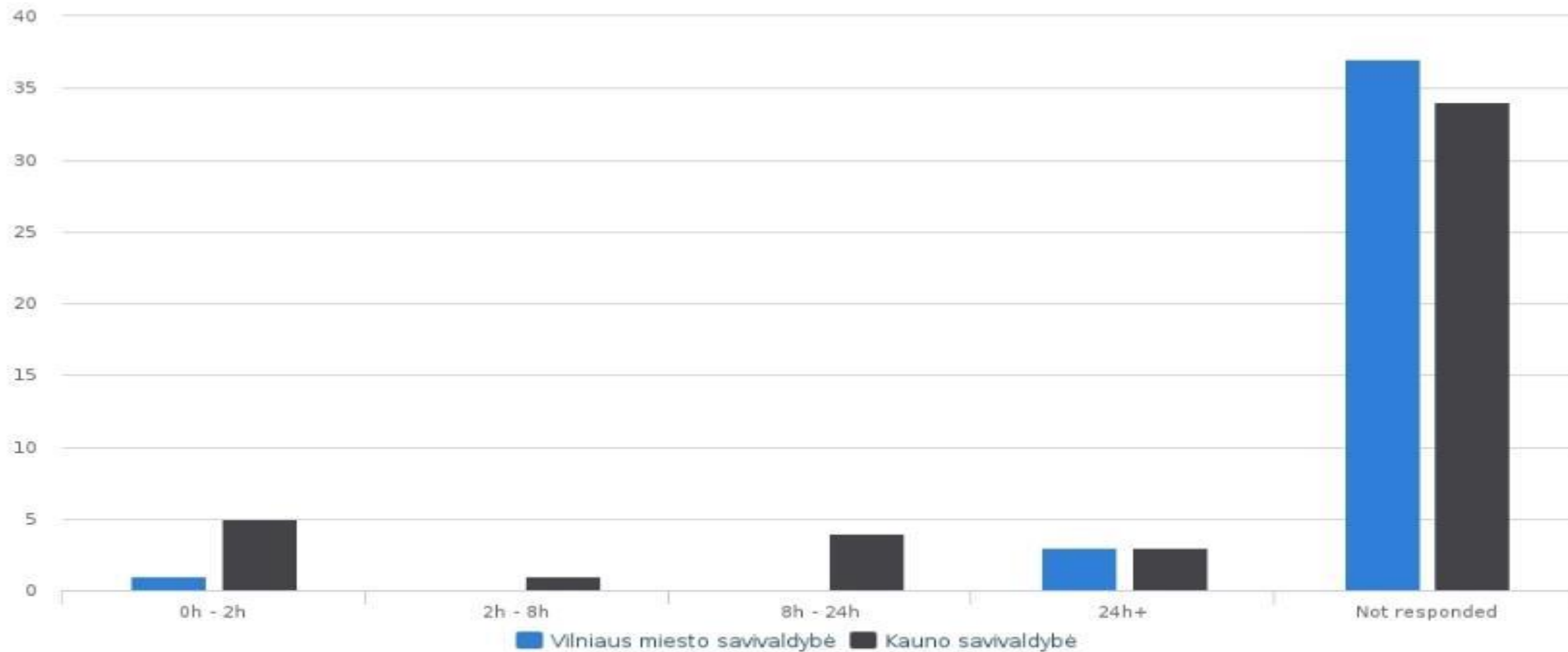


Social media as social

Social media as social



Social? Not so much... (quintly.com)



Examples

❖ Democratic Harm

- New York City Facebook
- New York City Police Department Twitter
- Regulations.gov

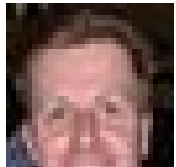
❖ Democratic Strengthening

- Electronic Town Hall
- Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority
- Virginia Beach Strategic Alignments—Virtual Smart City
- Titusville, FL Viral Video

Celebrate NYC



Celebrate NYC?



Remove

[Robert Miller](#) Check out dead animals at the NYC Animal Care and Control. Such a great city, such a horrible mayor. The City of NY deserves much better!!!!!!

[August 15 at 9:52pm](#) · [Like](#) · [2](#)

Celebrate NY... oh, wait...

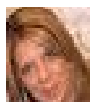


Remove

[Lorraine Graziano Crimando](#) TO THE CITIZENS OF NYC THAT VISIT THIS PAGE:

New York City is operating 3 animal shelters that are nothing more than slaughterhouses and murdering your unwanted pets at ever-growing rates. During the month of August, 2014 (so far), the NYC Animal Care & Control slaughtered 61 dogs and 299 cats. Any one of them could have been yours. When you surrender your pets to the NYC AC&C it can be and often is killed within 72 hours. Those lucky enough to survive beyond 72 hours get sick in the shelters, get no care, medicines are rationed and they're killed within 4-7 days WITHOUT SEDATION - which means that they suffer in agony for 3 minutes or more. The NYC AC&C makes you believe it provides "care" and "shelter" for your pets and that it will find them new homes and new lives. This is a LIE and you are paying for murder with your tax dollars.

Um, NYC, we have a problem...



Remove

[Debbie Dellernia Sciarabba](#) Please be aware that if you surrender your pet to NYC Animal Care and Control it will be murdered..There are 58 cats and 29 dogs on there murder list for 12 noon tomorrow. [Mayor Bill de Blasio](#)Be lied to us all, he promised to reform shelter care,but that was only to get the votes of animal lovers. He has done nothing to help the homeless animals,except to allow a useless director to go on a murdering spree...Risa Weinstock knows nothing about running a shelter.All she knows is how to lie.....I am so sorry I voted for you....The murdering is at a all time high..I DO NOT WANT MY TAX DOLLARS INVOLVED IN THE MURDER OF THESE VERY ADOPTABLE FAMILY PETS...PEOPLE BEWARE WHEN THEY TELL YOU THE WILL GET YOUR PET ADOPTED IT IS A LIE, IT WILL BE MURDERED WITHIN A FEW DAYS..

[August 16 at 1:56am](#) · [Like](#) · [1](#)

No, not the cute puppy picture!



Remove

[Danni Kerrigan](#) NYC shelter's dirty little secret. Some are really young some are seniors dumped by the family they loved but they don't mind killing them. They even kill animals that have an adoption hold. Sickening, who are the people that work there that can kill so many and still sleep at night? Who raised these murderers of innocents and babies? Tonight's list is posted. There are FOURTEEN dogs on the list. Many more coming up. Please start sharing NOW!!! The shelter closes at 8pm. <https://www.facebook.com/Urgentdeathrowdogs>



[Urgent Part 2 - Urgent Death Row Dogs](#)

Welcome to Urgent Part 2 / Urgent Death Row Dogs, an all-volunteer 501c3 corporation based out of NYC.
Non-Profit Organization: 106,277 like this

NYPD: Your Friendly Neighbors

Do you have a photo w/ a member of the NYPD? Tweet us & tag it [#mynypd](https://twitter.com/mynypd). It may be featured on our Facebook. [pic.twitter.com/mE2c3oSmm6](https://www.facebook.com/pic.twitter.com/mE2c3oSmm6)



NYPD: Your friendly neighbors

Free Massages from the [#nypd](#). What does YOUR Police Department offer?
Tweet at [#mynypd](#) pic.twitter.com/IFWr8exuqH



NYPD: Your friendly neighbors

The [#nypd](#) will also help you de-tangle your hair. [#mynypd](#) pic.twitter.com/nrngQ1bOWv



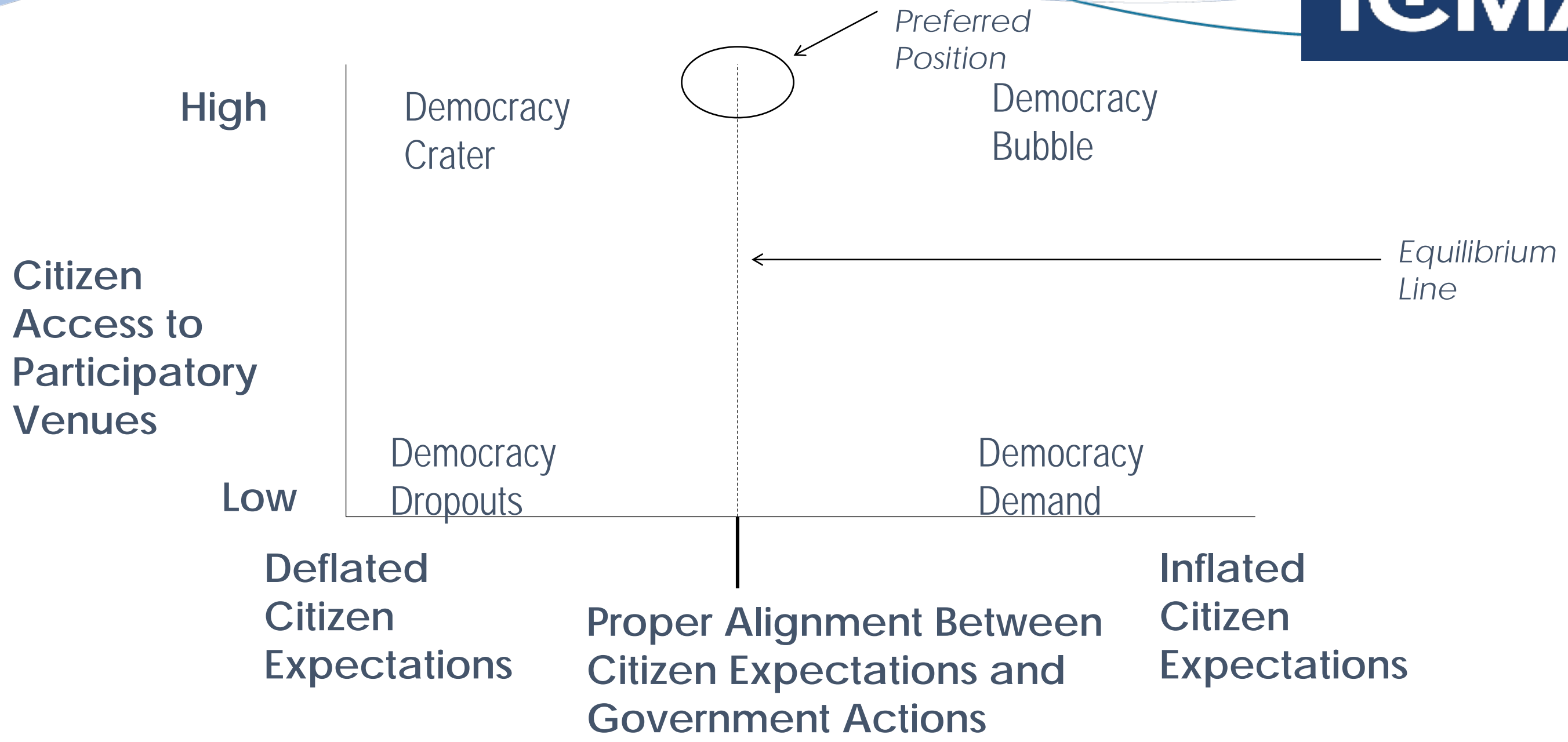
Democracy bubbles?

Regulations.gov

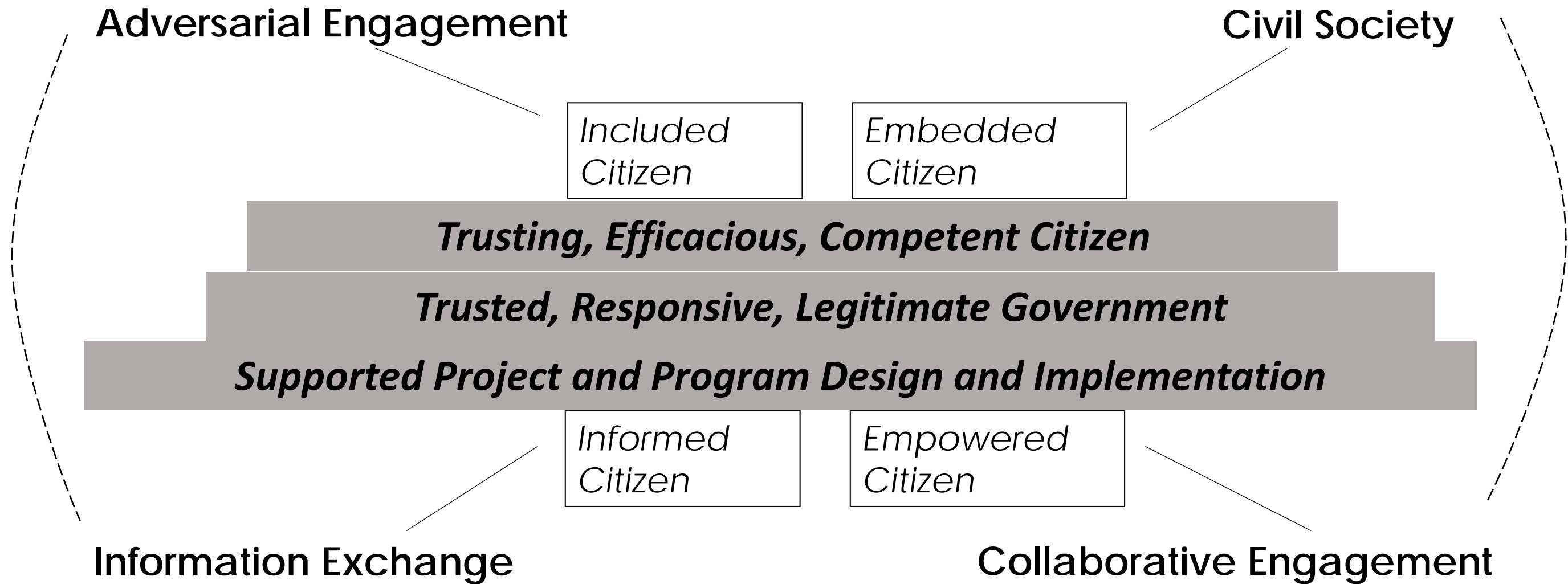
- Is it possible for government to be both more efficient and more open to participation *at the same time*?

Electronic Town Hall

- Ask citizens to contribute questions or ideas, and to vote for favorites



Model of public participation using social media



A model demonstration



Subway to the sea

- ❖ The social media space provides for adversarial engagement by allowing stakeholders to post views from all perspectives (build as planned, build but move the tunnel, or don't build), and the space administrators post links to social media spaces created by the advocates and opponents of the project, including to YouTube videos created on each side of the debate. Outcome: ***included citizen***.
- ❖ Space administrators post regular updates on the planning process. Outcome: ***informed citizen***.
- ❖ The space is open for any and all to join and post, thus permitting various other interest groups and community organizations to share ideas and suggest common concerns. Outcome: ***embedded citizen***.
- ❖ Space administrators openly respond to citizen queries, suggesting resources for further exploration or simply providing the facts to address the concern. Outcome: ***empowered citizen***.

Civility, or else

❖ **METRO FACEBOOK COMMENT GUIDELINES**

- Metro welcomes comments and opinions from all visitors to our online communities relating to Southern California transit topics and issues. All visitors to our sites need to abide by our online comment guidelines.

❖ **We encourage comments that:**

- Are "on topic", or that stick to the subject matter of the article or blog post.
- Are responses to comments left by other readers.
- Are brief and have a positive, constructive tone.
- Are open to being contradicted by other readers.
- Might disagree with the content in the article or blog post, but do not insult the writer (or commenter) of an article or blog post.

❖ **We discourage comments that:**

- Are not "on topic", or that don't stick to the subject matter of the article or blog post.
- Insult the writer (or commenter) of an article or blog post.
- Are non-constructive, hateful or spiteful.
- Should comments or exchanges develop into personal attacks or inappropriate remarks, Metro reserves the right to remove them.

Civility, or else

❖ **We will delete comments that contain language or imagery which:**

- Are defamatory, compromise public safety or operations, contravene law, or are disruptive or factually inaccurate.
- Are harassing, threatening or vulgar (including personal attacks or comments disparaging an individual or group based on ethnicity, race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation), invade personal privacy, contain sexual content or are obscene.
- Are advertising or spam, including any link to another site.
- Infringe on a copyright or other proprietary right.
- Violate any of this site's [Terms and Conditions](#).

❖ **Violation of Metro's online comment guidelines will result in a commenter's post being removed without notice.**

Smart virtual city (Virginia Beach)

- ❖ Is the “social” at the center of their strategic operations and engagement with stakeholders?
- ❖ Is the city benchmarking other cities to develop their virtual presence?
- ❖ Are social media strategies linked to offline governance objectives?
- ❖ Are citizens given, through an integration of social media and other online tools, the information necessary to participate meaningfully in debate?
- ❖ Are citizens given the space to express their views without fear of censorship?
- ❖ Do governments participate in dialogue with citizens, beyond unidirectional information sharing?
- ❖ Do citizens engage freely in discussion and debate with fellow citizens, enhancing understanding of a city’s culture?
- ❖ Is there a link between citizen discourse and policy decision making?

Titusville, FL- Viral Video

- ❖ Police department posted decisions regarding incident and the process involved; went over the process of an investigation. Citizens are able to engage and ask questions and address concerns. Outcome: ***included citizen***.
- ❖ Police department posts regular updates regarding the investigation (where they are in the process). Outcome: ***informed citizen***.
- ❖ Police department hosts an open briefing regarding the outcome of the investigation with PowerPoint of information; posts information via social media, including dash cam video footage. Citizens can post questions and comments. Interest groups and community organizations can share ideas and suggest common concerns. Outcome: ***embedded citizen***.
- ❖ Police department responds openly and engages community by hosting community forums moving forum; suggesting resources for further exploration or simply providing the facts to address the concern. Outcome: ***empowered citizen***.

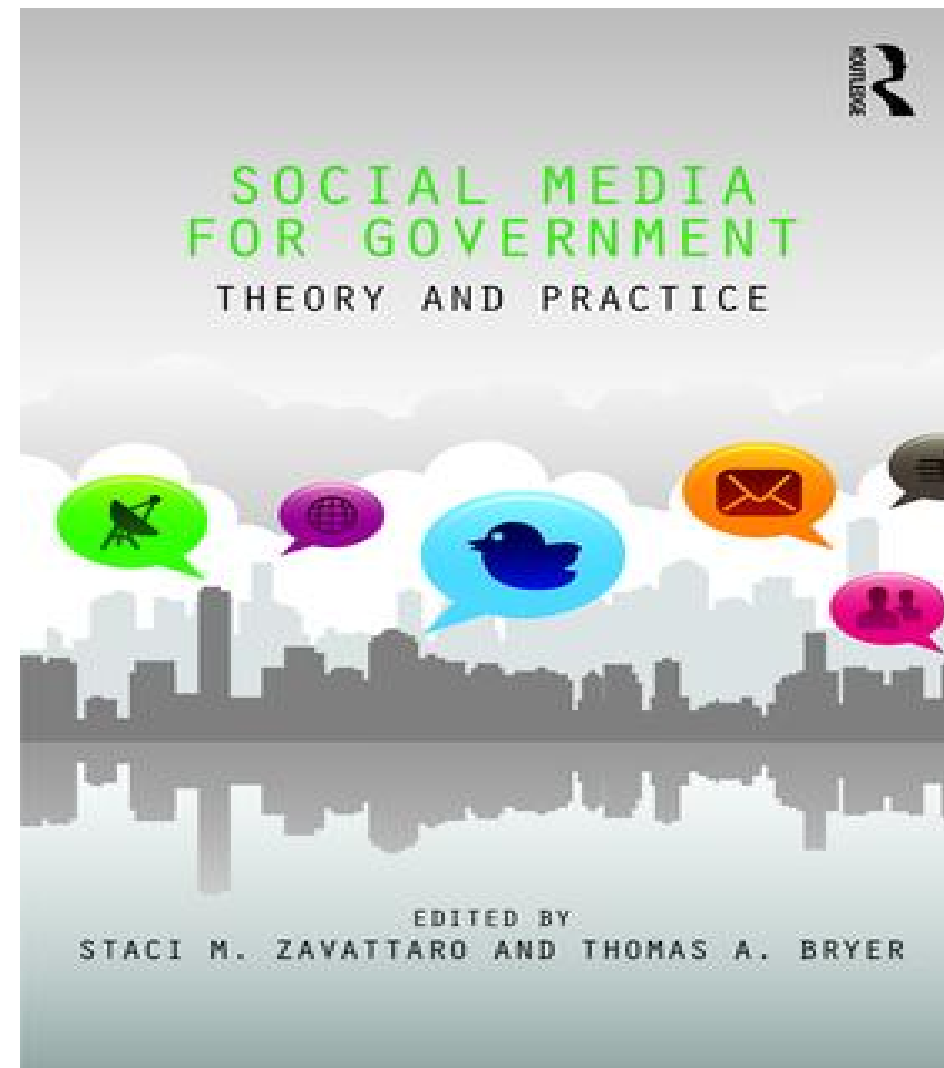
Other tools



Final principles/rules of thumb

- ❖ Be strategic in design and implementation of a social media public participation process.
- ❖ Use available technologies but do not force technologies; every tool has strengths and weaknesses. (e.g. no Tweet to 2-way talk, use blog or dis brd).
- ❖ Be open to learn about technologies and how to improve their use for public participation from citizens.
- ❖ Promote civility and reduce timidity.
- ❖ Be a full participant in discussions, and do not censor any perspectives.
- ❖ Use the same process as in an organizational strategic plan or public participation process plan: know your objective, align strategies, and measure or track how you are doing.

Readings and references



Readings and references

Bryer, T. A.
2013. Designing Social
Media Strategies for
Effective Citizen
Engagement: A Case
Example and Model.



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