

## Stakeholder Perception

Location: Alberta

Topic(s): Public Engagement

Please describe the situation.

In my last municipality we had a Town beach area that was used by all. Years previous we had diesel spill and fire from the railway. We received some funding to upgrade the beach area. The consensus of some of the stakeholders was that we were covering up the spill by doing the construction.

What was the current political environment? What factors led to the situation? What were the events that unfolded in this particular scenario?

Council was at the end of their term and an election was looming. I set up a working group with the railway, contractors and the funders to discuss how to move forward with the construction and address the spill at the same time.

How did you respond to or address the situation?

There came a point in the situation that I had to meet with Council and suggest that the best course of action was to put the construction off for a year. This was extremely challenging because the election was looming and the public had by this point had no access to the beach for two (2) years due to other gateway construction in the area. I had to convince Council this was the best course of action as putting off the construction for another year would allow us to address the spill and then move forward with no issues. I came up with a concrete plan with Council on how to address the public. It was a tough one.

What lessons did you learn from this scenario?

No matter how careful you are about addressing the stakeholders and public often they jump to their own conclusions. Council will, when given good valuable advice, usually make the right decision.

What advice would you give to someone going through a similar situation?

Don't jump to the first solution. Think long and hard and think strategically. Use your resources, others who have gone through similar situations. This is why we are in our role often we have to make the hard decisions.

If you would like more information regarding this case study, please contact:

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