

## Appendix A1. Being Heard (Voters & Non-Voters)

### Hugo Justice System & Public Safety Services Exploratory Committee Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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Appendix A1, *Being Heard*, is one of several appendices supporting the research document entitled, *Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015*.

- Hugo Justice System & Public Safety Services Exploratory Committee. Draft 2015. *Justice System & Public Safety Services Study Design: 2015*. Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Hugo, OR.

Justice System Exploratory Committee  
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society  
<http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/justicesystemexploratorycommittee.htm>

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#### AUTHORITY

- Hugo Justice System & Public Safety Services Exploratory Committee. Draft July 18, 2013. *Justice System & Public Safety Services Issue Scope Of Work (Scope)* Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Hugo, OR.

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## **Appendix A1. Being Heard (Voters & Non-Voters)**

The Hugo JS&PSS Committee believes that being heard refers to the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation, to make a difference through what one shares publically, especially what a citizen writes and takes ownership of in their own name (e.g., guest opinions, letters to the editor, comments to JO CO government and sheriff, comments in a formal participatory planning process, etc.), and to have a say in key decisions. For the purposes of the proposed Study design, the capacity to being heard and "have a say" is the opportunity to provide equal written input into important JS&PSS planning and assessment considerations, and have those ideas publically shared through accessible and transparent web publishing documents.

If diverse views held by citizens are in conflict and some views are excluded from an equal sharing, or other decision-making processes, or their voices are perceived to be overlooked and ignored, they are likely to become dissatisfied with that process. This could exacerbate public mistrust, undermine the legitimacy of any proposed solutions, and may well hamper implementation of majority potential solutions. Citizens feeling left out may challenge the potential solution(s), or simply refuse to participate with any proposed solutions as they have no ownership. They may even oppose a proposed solution(s), acting as "spoilers."

The capacity to influence important decisions restores one's sense that one is capable of handling life's problems and important in finding solutions. Conflict resolution is fostered when those most affected by the problem have a voice in open and inclusive decision-making. JS&PSS information processes that are informed by diverse points of view may contribute to a more lasting and stable solution(s).

The JS&PSS Committee believes there are benefits of a grass roots study design approach. The following are examples of a variety of ways that citizens can gain influence over important decisions.

1. Citizens sometimes gain a greater influence in policy decisions through networking around a common concern, issue, or project. Neighbors sharing can help citizens and communities influence important decisions.
2. In the context of JS&PSS information processes, research participants can interact with groups throughout the process to report on progress made, determine felt needs, and ascertain community support for provisions of potential alternative solutions. Efforts can and should be made to reach out to all groups: the movers and shakers, politically active voting citizens, and the non-voting citizens.
3. Wide public involvement in the JS&PSS information processes (i.e., all efforts including the Study as one of many) is the goal as the viewpoints of JO CO citizens. However, these efforts can be marginalized during traditional information sharing processes. This is when the design of agreements and implementation of solutions are simply imposed from the outside by external forces, usually government, and/or government agencies. One way to encourage public participation and grant citizens a greater influence in information processes is through grassroots

process design. This approach relies on citizens to provide insight about how to identify and manage problems and formulate their own goals for the future. It emphasizes the importance of granting citizens influence with the decision-making bodies that decide the future. As active participants, people at the grassroots level gain ownership of JS&PSS information processes and become "stakeholders" in the solutions meant to assist them. The aim is to promote a dialogue that increases the level of community participation in planning, managing, and supervising JS&PSS information processes. This includes active engagement in needs assessment, project design, and project evaluation. A common community strategy that gives citizens influence is participating in the design and implementation of JS&PSS information processes (i.e., participatory planning). This proposed Study design approach seeks to empower under-represented individuals to share their values in a written way, equal to other values, and thereby provide the planning process with the in-depth local knowledge about the history and root causes of the conflict and the different citizens involved, voters and non-voters.

In summary, various methods of inclusive governance can give diverse members of the population a chance to be heard. Increasing meaningful public participation, particularly among those from marginalized groups or bystanders, is a powerful way to ensure that citizens have input into important planning process decisions. Genuine participation requires social inclusion.