

## Meeting the Public's Information Needs in Silicon Valley

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### I. **Most Fundamental Challenge: Get People to Care about the Local Place**

....this is a pre-requisite to being receptive to or seeking out, "needing" local news and information....

Is a challenge for the SV region and for San Jose:

- *Maturing Place*...speed of growth, "gangly teenager" metaphor
- *Valley of In-Migrants*...connected to places, people, and issues elsewhere
- *Weak Sense of Place*...suburban development pattern, economic region, disconnect between Peninsula and South Bay/San Jose
- *Global Citizens and Corporations*... see self on global stage; see success as independent of this community; money made here, doesn't stay here; "I don't do local"

Most abundant, diverse region in the world, yet deep chasm between the capacity (intellectual, financial) of residents to engage where they live, and their predisposition to do so...

If there is not a predisposition to care about the community, people won't take a step to get in the information loop....chicken and egg?

### II. **Significant Stratification in How People Get Information; Complicates Ability to Engage Residents, Inform a Community About Itself**

- *(Older) Local influencers*...do read local newspapers, including weeklies; are dialed in to neighborhoods and local government;
- *Ethnic/immigrant communities*....ethnic media quite a following (Vietnamese, Latino, Chinese, Asian Indian).
- *Global citizens*...more likely to follow national/int'l media; SJ must show up in their world (New York Times, Financial Times, Singapore Business Times)
- *Engaging the Next Generation of Young Adults is Critically Important; Innovation Needed*

- Share SJ demographic projection: no growth in 35-55 year old population next 30 years (growth in older and younger)
- News is what they see online--no vetting process for accuracy, truth, significance; on positive side, is opportunity for direct, unfiltered message
- Example: General Plan Update 2040; how create network of people who express affinity with this cause—especially young adults?
- Experiments: Peak Democracy suite of Internet-based services (through Alliance for Innovation)
- Use art to engage on contemporary issues?
- Use the workplace? (1<sup>st</sup> ACT strategy)

### **III. San Jose Local Government Is Quite Active in Making Timely, Community-Relevant Information Available; Three Leadership Areas**

- *At Fore front: Business of Local Government*—Council meetings, live and archived on the Web; Council agendas and all reports on-line; public calendar on-line; Civic Center Cable TV (but proactive programming is weak)
- *At Forefront: Neighborhood Networks*—Strong Neighborhoods initiative (1/4 of residents) responds to neighborhood priorities, spent years building capacity of neighborhoods to articulate priorities (leadership, organization); pre-existing relationships can be tapped into at moments notice for very localized communication; key need: educate residents so they can make more informed decisions—have context, have data, understand trade-offs
- *Libraries*—as information centers, have been an early leader in e\*library; terminals to access information on the Internet are becoming as in-demand as books

#### **Close**

- Thanks for opportunity. Welcome dialogue. SJ is one of most forward looking, professionally managed large cities in America—is the most diverse city in America and the capitol of Silicon Valley. Are very interested in the Commission's work and being a part of innovation it may spark.