

# CLIMATE SOLUTIONS PORTFOLIO

## #2: A Web-Based Public Process

### Proposed Measure

There is widespread public support for the BC government's leadership on climate change. There is also a significant desire on the part of many people to participate in the development of a strong Climate Action Plan.

Public input is usually collected in three ways: (a) face-to-face meetings with stakeholders and concerned organizations; (b) public open houses and meetings; (c) websites designed to collect the public's ideas.

In support of (c), the BCSEA recommends the development of a sophisticated website that could maximize the public's involvement in a solutions-oriented, energetic manner that would be politically safe.

- (a) Establish an attractively designed website with separate areas for each main heading – Transport, Fossil Fuels, Financial Instruments, Buildings, etc. Create sub-rooms within each sector to facilitate input, eg (under Transport) Transit, Smart Growth, Vehicle Technologies, Cycling, etc, with a moderator in each area to encourage input and frame the discussion. Create a format that encourages input and ensures that people address the issues triggered by policy measures. Create new areas as demand arises.
- (b) Invite people to make submissions, and encourage on-line discussion and feedback. Invite people to rank ideas using the 5-Star system (as Amazon, YouTube), and to mark their favorites.
- (c) Invite people to post short video-clips promoting particular solutions, as on YouTube.
- (d) Invite people to post photos promoting particular solutions, as on Flickr.
- (e) Invite people to post songs, poems, photos, videos, and posters, and encourage viewers to rank them.
- (f) Invite people to debate the science of climate change if they want to in another area, where it will not interfere with the website's core function.
- (g) Invite people to link to the site through myspace.com, facebook.com, and personal websites.
- (h) Offer significant prizes for solutions that receive the highest rankings and are judged by an independent panel to be worthy of an award.

### Benefits

- A web-based approach will maximize public involvement, and encourage the multi-sector involvement that is so critical for success.
- Tens of thousands will participate, in addition to attendance at Open Houses.
- Using the 5-Star ranking system, the government can observe which ideas gain public acceptance and which are unpopular in a safe manner, without exposing itself to political risk.
- Popular ideas and practical ideas can be collected, while impractical ideas can be filtered out.
- If the website language and design catches the right notes, and if it clearly allows autonomous open debate, it may overcome public cynicism about government and foster a very creative flow of ideas, building the groundwork for subsequent public involvement in reducing emissions.
- Schools, colleges and businesses can all be involved.

### Execution

- Climate Action Secretariat – prepare a report, delineating and costing the project.
- Cabinet Approval: The use of such a high-profile web-based approach to gather public input.