

Attachment 4
Public Participation Plan Annual Review
Proposed Amendment to Appendix 2. Public Involvement Tools
Draft April 7, 2009

Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are websites that connect people by building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities. Social networking sites are web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile (2) create a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) share information with members of their list of connections. All allow users to find people or organizations they know among the members, or look for other members with similar interests or affiliations. Most social network sites offer a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail, instant messaging services or chat boards. The visibility of a profile varies by site and according to user discretion. Some sites allow users to enhance their profiles by adding multimedia content or modifying their profile's look and feel. Others allow users to add modules or applications that enhance their profile.

Social networking sites are part of 'Web 2.0 technologies' which are a group of second generation web development and design tools that are targeted at facilitating communication, secure information sharing, and collaboration on the world wide web.

Public social networking sites can be used to further promote government information and services and to announce events. Public social networking sites can also be used for recruitment. Interagency and intergovernmental social networking sites can promote cooperation across government.

There are many social networking sites that have been developed; presently, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are the most widely used.