

Appendix C: Review of Plebiscite and Additional Non-Binding Engagement Process Options

Table 1. Review of Plebiscite and Additional Non-binding Engagement Process Options (appendix)

	Plebiscite (non-binding, voluntary vote)	Statistically weighted online survey	Representative sample phone survey
Details	Full vote in person or by mail, similar to an election (e.g., choose concept A/B/C)	Opt-in invitation for online input via mailed postcards and survey (e.g., choose or rank concept A/B/C)	Opt-in invitation for phone input via calls to landlines and cell phones (e.g., choose or rank concept A/B/C)
Typical use	Binary decisions (e.g., borrowing, governance)	Complex/multi-topic input	Complex/multi-topic input
Timeline required	Medium/Long – ~ 3 months	Medium – ~ 2 or more months (depending on response rate)	Short/Medium – ~ 6 weeks
Community satisfaction with method	May satisfy some, while others may see it as unnecessary	May satisfy some; provides weighted input; may be seen by some to duplicate efforts of current online survey	May satisfy some; provides a representative sample to compare responses against current online survey
COSTS			
Approximate cost	\$80,000 (turnout unknown)	\$26,000 (350-550 responses expected)	\$16,000 (100 responses included) \$19,000 (200 responses included)
Approximate time delay (see costs below)	3-month delay	2-month delay	1.5-month delay
PARTICIPATION			
Who can participate	Electors only. Multiple people per household.	Any resident with Internet access. Multiple people per household (unique codes).	Any resident with a phone. Multiple people per household (randomized sample).
Expected responses	Turnout unknown	350-550 (2% to 3% of population)	100-200 (0.5% to 1% of population)
Representative sample	No	No, but statistically weighted by age, gender and region	Yes, matched to overall population
Accessibility	Accessible voting locations and mail-in options	Flexible format for online accessibility; inclusive options	Helps address barriers (mobility, time, literacy)
Biases	Self-selection (excludes people who are not motivated to engage)	Self-selection (excludes people who are not motivated to engage)	Non-response (excludes people who do not answer their phone)
OUTCOMES			
Depth of input	Clear preference from voters; no comments	Clear preference; comments	Clear preference; comments; opportunity for clarification

Democratic value	Direct vote; self-selection	Direct feedback; self-selection	Direct feedback; randomized selection
Statistical validity	Unknown (depends on voluntary turnout)	Yes	No
Representation expected	Voting typically trends to overrepresented groups (older ages, property owners, less diverse voices)	Weighted, so may overly amplify a small number of younger voices (even with targeted follow-up or extended timeline)	Lowest total number of responses, but greatest opportunity to hear from underrepresented groups
Risk & Analysis	The results may be seen as less impactful by some, with potential for misinterpretation and repeated input from already well-represented voices. May satisfy the small number wishing for a direct vote. More likely to hear from those in opposition.	Some may question the value if results don't reflect their expectations, with concerns about duplication, perceived bias, and input from already-engaged participants.	Results may be seen as more credible by some if they align with existing findings, though concerns about perceived bias and repeated input remain, even with broader representation.