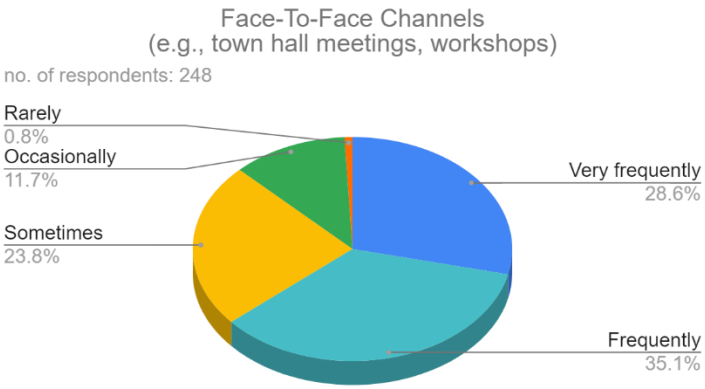
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CHANNELS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

This mini survey intends to better understand what channels the local governments employ to facilitate citizen participation in the public decision-making process. 248 respondents from 179 municipalities answered questions about citizen engagement channels, specifically, "To what extent does your government use the following channels to promote citizen participation in the decision-making process?" The survey was distributed in the fall of 2022 to 12,143 public officials in 1,248 municipalities with a population over 30,000 across the United States.

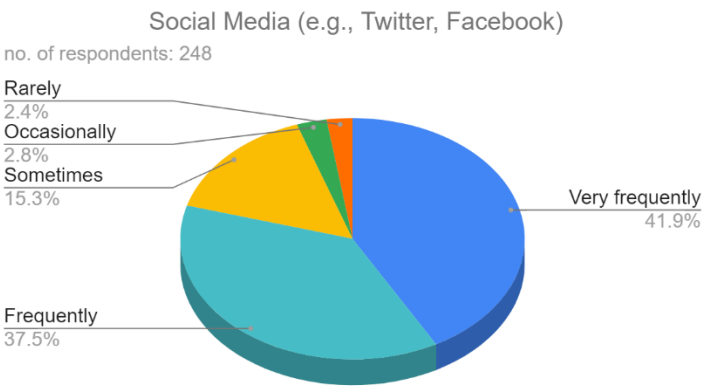
Face-to-face citizen participation



- Of the respondents, over **60%** reported that their municipalities engage with citizens through face-to-face methods, such as town hall meetings and citizen workshops.

Figure 1 Government usage of face-to-face citizen participation channels

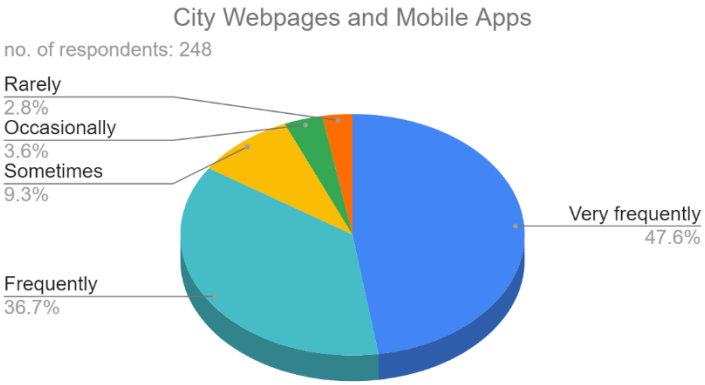
Social media citizen participation



- Approximately **80%** of respondents indicated that their municipalities frequently use social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook to facilitate citizen engagement in the decision-making process.

Figure 2 Government usage of social media as citizen participation channels

E-government citizen participation



- Regarding city webpages and mobile apps, **84.3%** of respondents reported frequent use of these channels to facilitate citizen engagement in the decision-making process

Figure 3 Government usage of web and mobile apps as citizen participation channels

Collaborate with FSU Sustainability and Governance Lab

- **FSU Sustainability and Governance lab** is a research hub that specializes in smart city technology adoption and citizen engagement using ICT. Our team of experts has experience and expertise in carrying out consultancy and research projects that aim to improve the quality of public services and narrow the equity gap in service delivery.
    - Explore ways for effective and equal community engagement using ICT with us.

- We can work with you to find innovative technology solutions, including mobile apps, AI, and smart sensors, that fit with the needs of your government to better provide public services.
- We can also help you develop arrangements for data collection, policy evaluation, and training for smart cities, sustainability, and resilience of your community.

- **Key findings** from our recent studies on smart city and citizen engagement:
  - Both the government and citizens view city mobile apps as an **innovative two-way communication tool** that encourages citizens to report service problems and facilitates service improvement[1,2].
  - City mobile apps are **unique from third-party social networking apps** (e.g., Facebook and NextDoor) with their strength in real-time citizen-government interaction and enhancing community-based public services[1].
  - **Minority groups** are more likely to **utilize smart technologies** to submit service requests, which can help to **narrow the equity gap** in service delivery[3].
  - However, the **potential** of city mobile apps being an **open dialogic and social space** to engage citizens in a full range of co-production activities **has not yet been sufficiently realized**[1,4].
  - Government leaders' **leadership style** plays a crucial role in electronic citizen engagement. Compared to a loyal politician who implements the objectives of their political party, an **efficiency-driven manager** is more likely to **engage citizens** in public decision-making[5].

- Our research suggests **strategies** for local governments and city app developers to **address e-governance challenges**[1,2].
  a) **Increasing citizen awareness** and wide adoption of city management apps is an important initial step.
     - For instance, during extreme weather events when citizens have greater needs to interact with the government, the app can be promoted on all communication channels (City of Tallahassee**).**

- **Citizen marketing campaigns tailored** to different age groups and communities are needed.

b) App designers should further **leverage smartphones' features**, such as ubiquitous connectivity, GIS function, and photo features.
   - **User context-aware solutions** that allow more **user control** and **personalization** in news and alert subscriptions, privacy protection, and adding or deleting functions within the city management apps are useful.

c) **Engaging users in the app development process** to gather feedback in different app development stages.

For additional information and inquiries, please visit our website (https://coss.fsu.edu/sglab) or contact FSU Sustainability and Governance Lab at ccss-sglab@fsu.edu.

- Cited Studies and Other Recent Studies from Sustainability and Governance Lab

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To cite this report:

Lee, H., Tang, T., Liu, Y., Li, W., and Zheng, G., 2023. "Citizen Participation Channels of Local Governments." Tallahassee, FL: Sustainability And Governance Lab, Florida State University.

For supporting this report, we thank Colin Morrill and Harper Walton from the FSU UROP Program.