

SOCIAL POWER IN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: SHIFTING SANDS

MAKE AN UNSTABLE FOUNDATION

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by  
JASON KLUMB

B.A., William Jewell College, 1990  
J.D., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1996  
M.Sc., London School of Economics, 1997

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SOCIAL POWER IN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: SHIFTING SANDS  
MAKE AN UNSTABLE FOUNDATION

Jason Klumb, Candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2021

ABSTRACT

This case study examines stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. Public bodies are increasingly exploring public-private partnerships to address high-cost, high-profile, high-risk public infrastructure needs. These multi-stakeholder procurement methods require a deeper understanding of stakeholder salience and power dynamics. The methodology in this study consisted of coding archival documents and interviews and analyzing data from worksheets provided by informants. Stakeholder theory is applied to the case of a \$1 billion new airport terminal project, and the findings reflect shifting salience among key stakeholders over the study's timeline. Power ratings were collected from key stakeholders to assess themselves and their peers throughout the process. Power ratings illustrated through radar charts demonstrated a progression toward a nearly equal distribution of power among highly salient stakeholders. In this case, the pre-solicitation phase evolved from presenting a sole-source, no-bid proposal with private financing to requiring a full and open competition with public financing. There was an evident decrease in the power rating for some stakeholders and an increase in the power rating for other stakeholders. These dynamics suggest that an academic and managerialist approach to public-private partnerships, particularly in the critical pre-solicitation phase, should consider the

application of stakeholder theory and collaboration techniques to better understand stakeholder salience and social power.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty, listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled "Social power in public-private partnerships: Shifting sands make an unstable foundation," presented by Jason Klumb, candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

David O. Renz, Ph.D., Committee Chair  
Department of Public Affairs and Administration

Nathan A. Mauck, Ph.D.  
Department of Finance

Brent R. Never, Ph.D.  
Department of Public Affairs and Administration

Max J. Skidmore, Ph.D.  
Department of Political Science

Greg W. Vonnahme, Ph.D.  
Department of Political Science

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This case study examines stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. The pre-solicitation phase is significant as a time of initiation and definition in which to explore and plan the expectations of a project. Public bodies are increasingly considering and utilizing public-private partnerships to address high-cost, high-profile, high-risk public infrastructure needs. As a result, multi-stakeholder procurement vehicles such as public-private partnerships deserve a deeper understanding of stakeholder salience and power dynamics. The focus of this study is the case of the Kansas City International (KCI) airport new terminal proposal, process, and project. As one expert explained, "public-private partnerships tend to be what I'd say are high priority projects that have not been feasible some other way, and the airport certainly fits that kind of project."

The methodology relies on the coding of archival documents, interviews with individuals knowledgeable about the proposal, process, and project, and worksheets that asked informants to rate their own perceived power and the power of stakeholders, those who affected the project and process. The study applies Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory for identification, Mitchell et al.'s (1997) classification framework for salience, and Wrong's (2019) bases of power to determine power ratings among stakeholders.

Findings reflect salience attributes among significant stakeholders over the timeline of the study. Informants who had direct knowledge and involvement in the proposal, process, and project provided their power ratings for themselves and their peers throughout

the process. The pre-solicitation phase of the case evolved from a no-bid, unsolicited proposal relying on private financing to a full and open competition using public financing. Power ratings narrowed as stakeholders exercised their power. Using radar charts to illustrate power ratings, it is evident there was a progression toward a balance of power among stakeholders. In this case, there was an apparent decrease in power for some stakeholders and an increase in power for others. The research suggests that an approach to public-private partnerships, particularly in the critical pre-solicitation phase, should consider further applying stakeholder theory and collaboration techniques to understand better stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase.

### **Public-Private Partnerships**

Definitions vary, but one working definition of a public-private partnership is a "cooperation between public and private actors with a durable character in which actors develop mutual products and/or services and in which risks, costs, and benefits are shared" (Klijn & Teisman, 2003, p. 137). The concept of public-private partnerships is not new. Gernet (1996) identified salt and iron mining in Imperial China over 2000 years ago, wherein private entities operated mines on behalf of the government. The British and Spanish Empires relied on private suppliers for soldiers and ships (Wettenhall, 2005). Andrews (1964) noted that when Sir Francis Drake's British fleet prevailed over the Spanish Armada in 1588, 82 percent of the sailors were private contractors to the Admiralty. Andrews (1964) also highlighted that the Virginia Company was financed privately in 1609 to establish settlements in America, and the East India Company of the

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries was a private venture that at its peak had an army twice the size of the British army.

Throughout the literature on public-private partnerships, there is a presumption that the arrangement will or should lead to enhanced program or service delivery through innovation and efficiencies (Steijn et al., 2011). The public entity, the city in this case study, represents the public interest and is represented by public officials. The private entity is frequently composed of multiple private sector organizations that have banded together to jointly pursue the partnership's project. Often these private sector organizations have trouble controlling self-interest and protecting proprietary information in a way that is beneficial to the joint-venture project's success (Boardman & Vining, 2012). These elements undermine the possible benefits of independent, innovative, efficient decision-making and project delivery (Fandel et al., 2012; Kort & Klijn, 2011).

Mixed motives and incongruous teaming arrangements can have downstream consequences and complicate the ability to deliver on expectations, which are frequently on full public display in these high-profile projects (Turhani, 2013). Despite these complications, the parties involved frequently explain projects in basic terms to make the arrangement appear simple or easy (Grossman, 2012). This dumbing down and one-size-fits-all explanation for successful public-private partnerships may not be in the public's best interest. When the public and private sectors form partnerships, there are sometimes negative perceptions, as this one expressed directly in a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article about "so-called public-private partnerships." The writer summed up what many may feel, that "the private sector will bring keen business 'efficiencies' (i.e., layoffs and low wages)

that benefit taxpayers and plutocrats alike" (Horrigan, 2018). The article's author pointed out, and as other researchers have noted, that public-private partnerships are not universally loved nor understood (Nisar, 2007). Therefore, it is not surprising that skills needed to design and implement a traditional government contract are different from those needed to design and implement a successful public-private partnership (Forrer et al., 2010).

Research into various aspects of public-private partnerships goes back decades and addresses various issues such as contractual structure, financial viability, and project feasibility (Brooks et al., 1984; Weaver & Dennert, 1987). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding stakeholder salience and social power fundamental to the success and failure of this increasingly important project delivery model.

### **The Case of the Unsolicited Proposal and the Airport Project**

Today in the U.S., the term public-private partnership, sometimes referred to as P3 or PPP, continues to gain familiarity, and it is explored as a possible procurement vehicle, especially for large public works projects. It was in this spirit that on a sunny May 12, 2017, three dozen influential people from Kansas City gathered in a parking lot at the 50-year-old airport. These elected officials, business and industry leaders, and opinion-makers presented a proposal for a new airport terminal. As the mayor explained, the unsolicited proposal was for a local private development group, hereafter called the initial proposer, to finance the design and construction of a new terminal. Over the previous several years, the airport dominated the news, with a fierce debate between those who wanted to keep the

airport like it was and those who wanted to replace the three horseshoe-shaped terminals with a new single terminal, reflecting updated security requirements and user expectations.

The parties to the proposal standing beside the mayor at the announcement included the initial proposer who would design and build the facility, the local financier who would pay for the project, the city manager, and others. Several city councilmembers were also present, including the chair of the airport oversight committee. Others were not at the event, including other airport builders, an outspoken leader of a citizens group, and certain city councilmembers. Everyone, it seemed, quickly became interested in the proposal, which addressed what was described as the most significant public works project in the city's history. Everyone, it seemed, mobilized. Organized labor had a stake in the construction and operations of a new facility. Competing developers, media outlets, and citizens groups, among others, started to assess and exercise their power. Several weeks of tense public discussions, negotiations, discord, and decision-making followed with numerous reviews and revisions to the proposal and the process, as the various parties assessed, adjusted, and asserted their social power. Finally, after a convoluted 10 weeks, the city abandoned the unsolicited proposal, initiated a full and open competition, disqualified the local developer, and awarded the contract for the roughly \$980 million project to a national developer. Today, the new terminal is under construction and has a price tag of over \$1.5 billion (Hardy, 2021, A1).

### **Timeline of the Study**

The timeline of the study begins in Spring 2017, a few months prior to the mayor's announcement on May 12, 2017, of an unsolicited proposal for an airport new terminal.

However, for context, this research went back to 2012 to identify significant events and stakeholders. In 2012, a leader from the aviation department first voiced support for a new terminal at the airport. To many city hall watchers, the May 12, 2017, announcement of an unsolicited proposal meant the city and the initial proposer had usurped the pre-solicitation phase and the traditional procurement process. With the 10-week timeline of this study, the city reversed course, called for a full and open competition, and accepted bids on July 18, 2017.

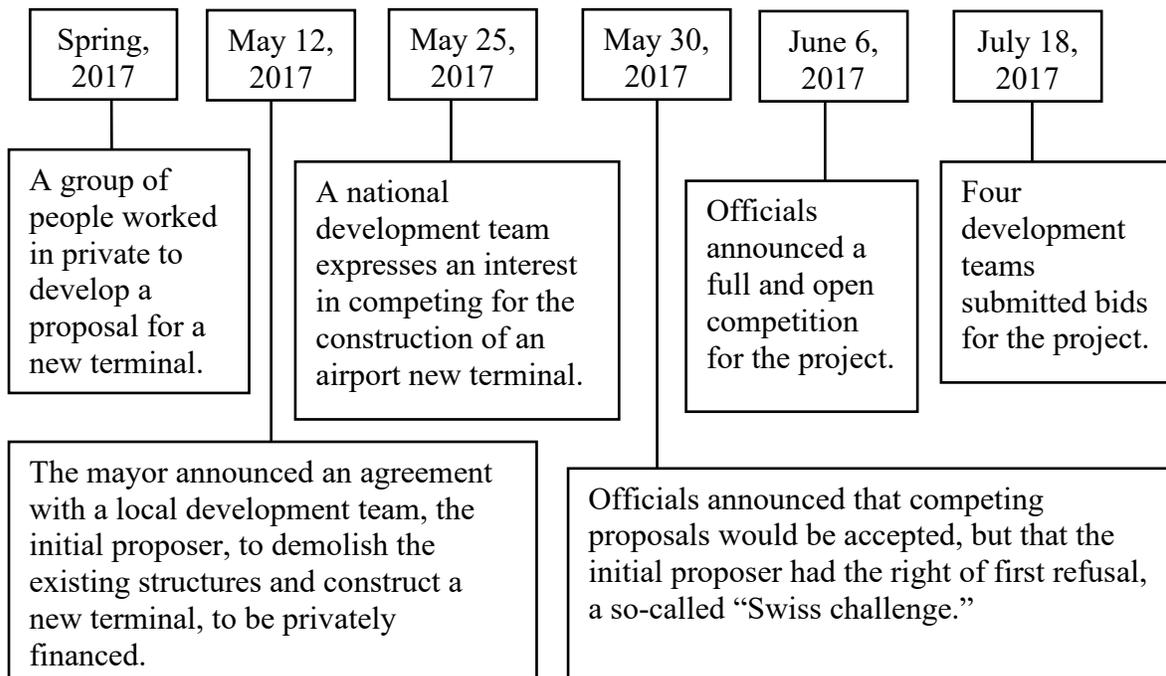


Figure 1.1. Significant Events in the Timeline of the Study

Competing developers responded to a formal request for proposals (RFP), which was the solicitation issued by the public sector requesting project proposals from qualified private-sector informants. The drama played out in three acts:

Act 1. Prelude to the Partnership: Spring 2017. For several years, the airport had been a dominant topic in public discussions. There were dozens of news stories, disagreements and discord, and an *ad hoc* commission that concluded the existing terminals were obsolete (Berkebile, 2017, A9). On May 8, 2017, just days before the surprise announcement, the *Kansas City Star* highlighted the public debate with an editorial headline, "Kansas City must either build a new terminal structure or dramatically overhaul the existing terminals within the next five to 10 years" (Helling, 2017, p. A3).

Act 2. The Reveal Then Revision: May 12 to May 30, 2017. The mayor announced the unsolicited proposal on May 12, 2017, as a no-bid proposal to finance, design, and construct a new terminal, relying on a local team using local private financing. No-bid meant there would be no solicitation and no competition. Sometimes called sole-source, no-bid was essential to the proposal. The mayor only negotiated with one developer. Then on May 24, 2017, a competing developer sent a letter to city hall asking the city to engage in what the developer called a robust, transparent, competitive process. The following week, on May 30, the city acquiesced.

Act 3. Let the Games Begin: May 30, 2017, to July 18, 2017. The city initially agreed to a so-called Swiss challenge, which the newspaper explained would "open the process to competing offers but allow the company making the original bid to match the winning bid" (Vockrodt, 2017a, A3). The city manager referred to a Swiss challenge

concept as a right of first refusal, allowing the initial proposer to review and match the best bid. However, one astute observer described the Swiss challenge as "the first crack in the plan because of the notion that, okay, we understand that other people may want to step forward." One week after the Swiss challenge, the city abandoned the right of first refusal and instead committed to full and open competition on June 6. Bids were initially due on June 20, but the city council subsequently extended the due date to July 18, 2017. A timeline setting out key dates and corresponding events is present in Figure 1.1.

Discussion, deliberation, and discord dominated the 10 weeks from the announcement by the mayor of the unsolicited proposal to the submission of competing bids. Federal law describes an unsolicited proposal as a unique and innovative idea or approach that has been developed outside the government to be made available to government agencies (Federal Acquisition Regulation [FAR], 2014). One of the informants familiar with government procurement described an unsolicited proposal similarly as when the "private sector says 'hey, I got an idea.'" The announcement of that idea revealed a lack of a formal pre-solicitation process and set off a series of events where confusion was high, acrimony grew, and social power among salient stakeholders was on frequent display.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem addressed by this case study reflects a lack of understanding and appreciation for stakeholder salience and social power in public-private partnerships, particularly in the early pre-solicitation phase of large public works projects. In U.S. Federal law, pre-solicitation is essential, as evidenced by the requirement of federal

agencies to “achieve full and open competition . . .” (The Public Contracts Act, 41 USC §3301). In furtherance of this objective, government officials can conduct pre-solicitation conferences with the private sector to draft an RFP that will foster full and open competition. In the case of the new terminal, federal law did not control, but the city was following local procurement ordinances.

An empirical study conducted by researchers from the University of Toronto illustrated the problem. They created a power model used to measure the certainty of stakeholders among various stakeholder groups (El-Gohary et al., 2006). Then, the authors looked at newsletters, websites, public meetings, publications of notices, and stories in local news outlets to examine stakeholder involvement and social power. They pointed out concerns regarding public-private partnership stakeholder involvement due to the fragmented nature of knowledge, which deserved further study and an “interdisciplinary understanding of [power and stakeholder involvement] concepts by procurement officials” (El-Gohary et al., 2006, p. 604). The authors concluded that power and “stakeholder involvement should not be overlooked when planning for [public-private partnerships]” (El-Gohary et al., 2006, p. 604). Their study illustrated that additional investigation of stakeholder salience and social power dynamics in developing and executing public-private partnerships would be helpful. This study focuses more closely on highly significant stakeholders and more directly on the formation or pre-solicitation stage of one high-profile public-private partnership.

## **Research Questions**

To further explore issues of salience and power in the case of the airport new terminal and the context of public-private partnerships, the following research questions were investigated:

RQ1. Who are the salient stakeholders during the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership, in what ways are those stakeholders salient, and how does their salience change over time?

RQ2. What are the forms of social power exercised by salient stakeholders, including its nature and degree?

RQ3. How do the salient stakeholders exercise their social power, and how does their social power evolve over the course of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership?

RQ4. What are the implications of the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders over time?

RQ5. How does the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders influence the effectiveness or success of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership?

## **Synopsis of the Methodology**

I used a single case study design to understand stakeholder salience and social power. This case study focused on the airport new terminal public-private partnership because it represented a revelatory situation where a no-bid, unsolicited proposal quickly gave way to a traditional full and open procurement process to involve competition. This

case provided an investigative opportunity to observe and analyze a phenomenon previously unstudied (Stake, 2010).

Data collection procedures involved gaining information through archival documents, personal interviews, and worksheets that allowed a scoring of the perceived power of stakeholders involved in the pre-solicitation timeline. The objective was to investigate the evolution and dynamics of the public-private partnership proposal and process. Informants consisted of individuals closely involved in the events of the timeline, for example, the airport advisory committee members, representatives of citizens groups, current and former city councilmembers, competing developers, consultants and experts, organized labor representatives, news reporters covering the events, and business leaders.

### **Rationale and Significance**

Hardin (2002) suggested that a changing role of government in changing economic times may result in a decline in understanding, awareness, and trust of government activities. Regarding public works projects specifically, a decrease in financial resources for governments at the local, state, and federal levels results in the need for alternative financing (Rall et al., 2010). These economic and political conditions lend themselves to an appeal by public officials and private providers to consider public-private partnerships.

The significance of this study is a deeper understanding of stakeholder salience and social power during the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. In this case, unbalanced power distribution at various stages in the timeline contributed to resentment and rivalries. The exercise of stakeholder power rebalanced perceived power. As the new terminal process became more open and transparent and invited competition, power

appeared to be more balanced and distributed more evenly, suggesting an optimal distribution of power drawn toward the midpoint power rating. Stakeholder interaction and exercise of power affected the development and execution of the public-private partnership. One informant described it this way: “[u]ltimately the system worked, the political process worked, and as the community had the opportunity to really be brought into the project, so I actually think it’s a major success story for our city.” Future informants, practitioners, and academics who consider policies that guide the development and implementation of public-private partnerships can draw on this research to better: (a) identify projects worthy of pursuing; (b) improve the pre-solicitation process; and (c) better assess risks to help avoid unsuccessful projects.

Decisionmakers can then apply the concepts of social power in public-private partnerships to (a) prospective projects and planning, (b) the consortia of stakeholders involved for a successful pre-solicitation, and (c) the economic, political, and social circumstances surrounding a plan and project.

Despite decades of scholarship into certain aspects of public-private partnerships, there is limited research in the areas of stakeholder salience and social power (Hardin, 2002). The key to accurately identifying highly salient stakeholders, retrospectively and prospectively, is detailed attention to individuals and organizations who present themselves on an issue. Identifying and refining stakeholder lists is an ongoing process. Measuring power ratings is achieved most effectively through the participation and cooperation of informants, including but not limited to stakeholders, who have first-hand knowledge and

experience with the project. Once measured, efforts to promote a balanced distribution of power can be employed to pursue an optimal distribution of power.

Data gathered in this empirical study revealed that with little or no formal pre-solicitation phase, this public-private partnership proposal failed to secure the necessary stakeholder agreement. The initial proposal gave way to more robust pre-solicitation activities that eventually led to an increase in the public role through the adoption of public financing, reflecting a traditional approach, and the exclusion of private financing that would have nested the proposal within the public-private partnership procurement system, as seen in Figure 2.2. In the process, an agreement was finally reached after more highly salient stakeholders possessed power ratings in a more equally distributed way.

### **Role of the Researcher**

As a researcher, I am intrigued by this study from an academic perspective. I am also a lawyer by training. Previously, I was a senior executive in the U.S. General Services Administration, an agency involved in large-scale federal procurements and construction projects. I also served as an elected member of the Missouri legislature, and I am a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps. Thus, understanding and potentially improving government procurement, particularly public-private partnerships, is of educational, practical, and professional interest.

Glense (1998) observed that monitoring who you are as a researcher and the lenses or perspectives from which you view your work is now an expected part of qualitative research studies. Moreover, "all researchers bring values to a study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 18). Subjectivity and bias are inherent in case study research and, if not illuminated, can be

limitations of the study. Nevertheless, subjectivity and biases help to explain how a topic relates to the life of the researcher. I am a good-government idealist, believing in an open and transparent democracy, including in contracting and government procurement. My perspective was framed within my past, coupled with assumptions derived from years in public service, public policy creation, and infrastructure procurement. Throughout the research, I was cognizant that, as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explained, all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

Chapter One of this document lays out a background of public-private partnerships, the circumstances around the airport new terminal proposal, and the study's timeline. Then, I restate the problem and address the purpose through the research questions. Next, I summarize the methodology, presented the significance of the study, and addressed the researcher's role and assumptions. Chapter Two explores the existing literature in the area of public-private partnerships, stakeholder salience, and social power. I discuss key ideas, definitions, and categorizations of salience and power. There is a gap in the literature surrounding stakeholder salience and power in the pre-solicitation phase and limited collaboration literature as applied to public-private partnerships. Chapter Three outlines the methodology used for the study. A qualitative case study was appropriate to answer the research questions. Chapter Four sets out the findings gathered from an analysis of archival documents, interviews, and worksheets completed by informants with firsthand knowledge and who were able to rate different types of perceived power throughout the process.

Chapter Five analyzes the findings with a focus on the implication of the exercise of social power, particularly shifts and trends. Finally, Chapter Six concludes the study with implications, limitations, contributions, and suggestions for further research.

### **In Conclusion**

As the airport new terminal process became full and open regarding the request for proposals and procurement competition, power appeared significantly more balanced, suggesting an optimal distribution of power drawn toward the midpoint power rating and present is all highly salient stakeholders.

On September 6, 2017, six weeks after the timeline of this case study, the [initial proposer], the hometown team, which had “mounted an elaborate public campaign this summer touting its . . . roots, was disqualified from consideration after city attorneys advised that its proposal didn’t conform to municipal bond laws” (Vockrodt, 2017b, C1). That same day, for the \$1 billion project, the selection committee recommended a successful bidder, an out-of-town team. Two months later, on November 8, 2017, 76 percent of voters supported an airport new terminal with a provision to demolish the airport’s horseshoe-shaped terminals in favor of a single, privately financed \$1 billion terminal. Fast forward four years and more debate on the airport, on October 1, 2021, A city councilmember declared, “[t]his is a billion-dollar contract over 15 years. We better not make a mistake. I think it’s fine to trust the process, but you better verify it too” (Hardy, 2021, A1). Their declaration about the airport concessions contract was four years after the airport new terminal proposal and one day after the newspaper ran a story headlined, “‘Shit show’: [airport] concessions contract approved, heads to council after the

dramatic meeting (Hardy, 2021, A1). Shifting sands make an unstable foundation, and sometimes the more things change, the more they stay the same.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores significant literature relevant to the study of stakeholder salience and social power related to public-private partnerships in the pre-solicitation phase. The literature review seeks to identify the current body of knowledge and research trends to help understand the research topic and shape future research. An examination of literature explaining and distinguishing between traditional government procurement and public-private partnerships. Next is literature into relevant theoretical frameworks includes agency theory, resource dependence theory, and stakeholder theory. Also reviewed is a recent thread of research that explored the integration of agency and stakeholder theories. Finally, the literature review covers stakeholder dynamics in public-private partnerships, looking specifically at assessing, engaging, influencing, and managing.

A public-private partnership is the intersection of the public sector and private sector as they engage to effect and enhance the delivery of public services through the use of a non-traditional project delivery method (Bloomfield, 2006; Provan & Milward, 2001; Trafford & Proctor, 2006). The public entity represents the public interest represented by public officials. The private entity is generally composed of several private sector informants who have banded together into one organization to pursue the partnership's project jointly. A perception exists that public-private partnerships inherently offer the benefits of independent, innovative, and efficient decision-making (Fandel et al., 2012; Kort & Klijn, 2011). However, research suggests that self-interests by private sector informants are prevalent in a way that can be detrimental to the success of a public-private

partnership project (Boardman & Vining, 2012). In addition, conflicting motives and incongruous teaming arrangements have downstream consequences and complicate the ability to deliver on public expectations, which are frequently high (Turhani, 2013). These dynamics can lead to confused, confounded, and sometimes angry stakeholders. The pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership is a time to address some of these dynamics preemptively.

### Pre-solicitation Phase

As illustrated in Figure 2.1., the pre-solicitation phase is sometimes referred to as the initiative, exploration, front end, planning, or shaping phase of a project (Aaltonen & Kujala, 2010; Achterkamp & Vos, 2008; Jepsen, 2013; Eskerod & Vaagaasar, 2014; Floricel & Miller, 2001; Koppenjan, 2005).

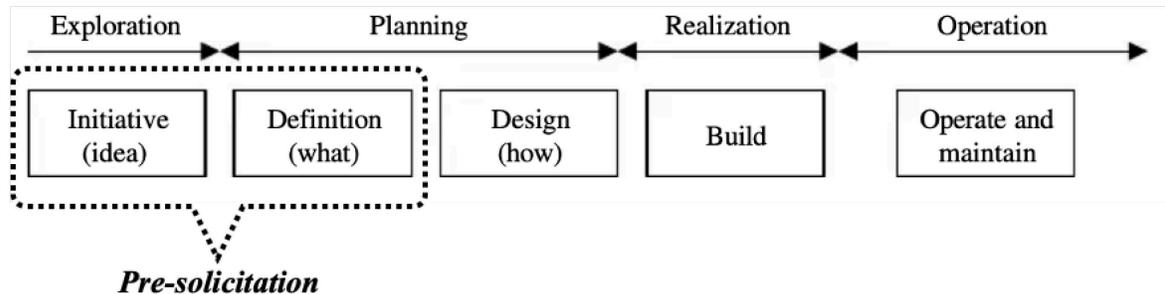


Figure 2.1. Pre-solicitation Over Koppenjan’s Phases of Project Development  
 Source: Koppenjan, J. J. F. (2005). The formation of public-private partnerships: Lessons from nine transport infrastructure projects in the Netherlands. *Public Administration*, 83(1), 135-157.

The pre-solicitation phase is particularly vulnerable to ambiguity, dynamic stakeholder interaction, and high levels of uncertainty, deserving of further study (Floricel & Miller, 2001; Kolltveit & Gronhaug, 2004; Miller & Lessard, 2000). The results of this

research will contribute to the toolbox by expanding an understanding of stakeholder salience and social power as they relate to public-private partnerships in the pre-solicitation phase.

### **Traditional Government Procurement and Public-Private Partnerships**

Traditional government procurement is a standard system for government construction projects (Masterman, 2002). Figure 2.2. shows that a traditional procurement, labeled as the Traditional Approach, follows a severable and sequential procurement process, e.g., the design followed by bidding followed by construction. Competition through bidding is generally encouraged and expected in traditional procurement. The public participant is the purchaser, sometimes called the client or buyer. This public participant has the need and the idea and dictates the terms and conditions of the project. The Design-Bid-Build (DBB) system is the oldest and most traditional system (Moore, 2002). Standard practice is the public issuance of an RFP so that all private participants who are willing and able may submit a bid, sometimes called a proposal or a tender (Forrer et al., 2010).

In contrast, a no-bid, or sole-source, procurement bypasses competitive bidding and instead designates a single vendor as the sole supplier (Robinson, 2009). The U.S. federal government codifies both the competitive and no-bid procurements in the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), which at its core formalizes an intent to maintain a centralized structure and unified standards. Regulations at the state and local level generally adopt similar standards and structures as the FAR, applying them through state and local procurement rules or practices (Robinson, 2009).

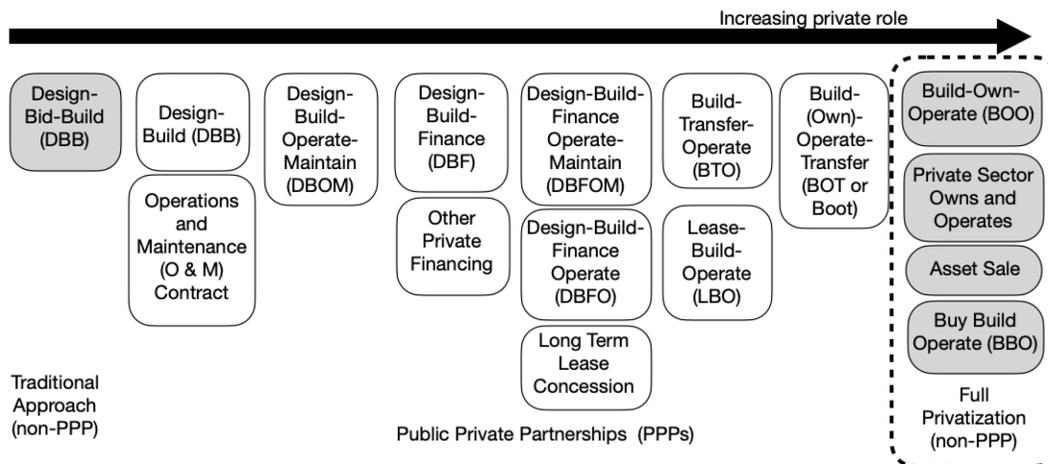


Figure 2.2. Traditional, Public-Private Partnership & Privatization Procurement Systems  
 Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019

Public-private partnerships are distinct from traditional procurement and reflect a collaborative effort among stakeholders to facilitate a dynamic and flexible process to achieve joint decision-making through multi-stakeholder involvement (Getz & Jamal, 1994). Definitions and understanding are wide-ranging and inconsistent (Hodge & Greve, 2007). One working definition of a public-private partnership upon which I rely is a “cooperation between public and private actors with a durable character in which actors develop mutual products and/or services and in which risks, costs and benefits are shared” (Klijn & Teisman, 2003, p. 137). Generally, in public-private partnerships for construction projects, the private sector goes beyond contracted design and construction to take on project finance and perhaps even facility operations and maintenance (Osborne, 2000), as shown in Figure 2.2.

In many cases, the private participant may provide operations for an extended term, frequently for 20 to 50 years (Solheim-Kile & Wald, 2019). The length of the relationships and the likelihood of changes in leadership and operations teams adds to the complexity

and necessity of aligning teams, relationships, and culture of stakeholders (Zou et al., 2014). There is significant literature that reflects a perception that construction projects sourced through a public-private partnership provide the parties to the agreement an incentive to minimize, avoid, and mitigate delays and that the cooperation between public and private actors leads to better and more innovative services and project outputs (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015; Eggers & O’Leary, 1995; Frederickson, 1996, Ghobadian et al., 2004; Hodge et al., 2010). Literature suggests that private sector contracts, including public-private partnerships, are better managed than public sector contracts (Wettenhall & Thynne, 2002). Some scholars have made the counterpoint that simply involving the private sector in a project does not make the project immune from market forces and market failures (Damoah & Akwei, 2017). Additionally, research shows that public-private partnerships are also vulnerable to corruption, cost overruns, and limited citizen participation (Nisar, 2007; Sclar, 2000; Starr, 1988).

When understood as a collaborative effort, public-private partnerships include the familiar aspect of cooperation between public and private entities, including shared risk and multiparty delivery of products and services (Hodge & Greve, 2005; Klijn & Teisman, 2003; Savas, 2000). The broader study of collaboration has seen robust academic research in areas such as cross-sector collaboration (Babiak & Thibault, 2009); governmental entities (Heath & Sias, 1999; Keyton et al., 2008; Koschmann & Laster, 2011; Lawrence et al., 1999); and non-profits (Gray & Purdy, 2018; Hardy et al., 2003). The literature on collaboration is so broad and vast that Thomson (2001) wrote, “[t]he field of collaboration is far too eclectic in its current state to identify any one theoretical perspective that

adequately explains collaboration” (p. 162). A uniting indicator is interdependence, which originates in the resource dependence theory of Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), who wrote that organizations must create a system of exchange of resources to survive. In public-private partnerships, one accomplishes this exchange of resources through the partnerships, which scholarly literature described using collaboration terminology, e.g., access to resources, collective responsibility, dispute resolution, joint ownership (Davies & Hentschke, 2006; Gray & Wood, 1991).

Consistent with this theme, Kanter (1994) recommended that organizations cultivate and nurture relationships among partners and stakeholders so that managing the differences among them would be constructive and effective. Kanter (1994) noted a gap in collaboration literature regarding the significance of stakeholder relations and relationship building, and she observed that the purpose of the collaboration was to “manage the relationship and not just the deal” (p. 96). In doing so, a trust could be established and enhanced through stakeholder relationship-building by bringing stakeholders together to foster and strengthen the collaborative effort or partnership (Das & Teng, 1998; Kanter, 1994). In short, through decades of research into public-private partnerships, a fundamental element was consistent: the public participant and the private participant have a stake in the project (Forrer et al., 2010; Hodge & Greve, 2019; Walker & Smith, 1995).

### **Theoretical Framework: Agency, Resource Dependence, Stakeholder**

Three predominant theoretical perspectives relevant to the literature on stakeholder salience and social power in public-private partnerships are agency theory, resource dependence theory, and stakeholder theory, as reflected in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Theoretical Underpinnings Applicable to Public-Private Partnerships

<b>Perspective</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Possible effect(s)</b>
Agency theory	Jensen and Meckling (1976)	Separation and control	Identify balance(s) of power. Are there controls in place to counter imbalances? What are the motives of partners/participants? In public-private partnerships, what is the right amount of control?
Resource dependence theory	Pfeffer and Salancik (1978)	Resource dependence	How do fiscal realities and availability of other resources affect partner-ability? What dependence-mitigation methods are available and employed? In public-private partnerships, how are availability, criticality, and scarcity applied? Who has what resources, what power derives from those resources, and how is it used?
Stakeholder theory	Freeman (1984)	Identify, balance, and optimize	Who and what really counts as a stakeholder (and why)? Are/how are stakeholder interests balanced and optimized? What are the developing coalitions and collaborative opportunities or pitfalls? In public-private partnerships, do stakeholders and stakeholder salience change during various steps in the pre-solicitation phase?

Source: Adapted from Renz & Andersson, 2012.

### Agency Theory

Agency theory arose from a seminal work by Jensen and Meckling in 1976, when the authors explained the interoperability between the principal, the entity directing the work, and the agent, the party doing the work. The authors built on the definition adopted by Ross (1973) that “an agency relationship has arisen between two (or more) parties when one, designated as the agent, acts for or on behalf of, or as a representative for the other, designated as the principal” (p. 134). As agency theory evolved, there grew a presumption that agents would act upon imbalances in the relationship unless they were controlled, or

incentivized, not to do so (Fama & Jensen, 1983; Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Jensen & Ruback, 1983); and individuals would choose themselves over the collective (Eisenhardt, 1985). The behavioral assumptions were self-interest, risk aversion, and a tendency to act opportunistically (Eisenhardt, 1989). The implication was that the use of contracts could control behavior, for example, to prevent adverse actions and moral hazards (Van Puyvelde et al., 2013). The positivist agency theory attributed to Eisenhardt (1989) was popular in management research and applied to organizational behavior and corporate governance, and over the decades, a wide variety of disciplines have applied agency theory, including communications (Turner & Muller, 2004; Diallo & Thuiller, 2005), economics and finance (Sappington, 1991), political science (Moe, 1984), project management (Ceric, 2012), relationships and trust (Brewer & Strahorn, 2012; Zwikael & Smyrk, 2015), social sciences (Shapiro, 2005), and supply chain management (Zsidisin & Ellram, 2003).

Bergen et al. (1992) posited that most commercial relationships adhered to an agency model, and Mitnick (2013) saw essential elements of agency in all contractual arrangements. However, other authors also criticize the fundamentals of agency theory (Perrow 1986; Wright et al., 2001). Some scholars argued that agency theory inherently created incentives that resulted in asymmetric information and goal incongruence, thus creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of opportunism and selfishness (Grout 2003; Wiseman et al., 2012).

As applied to public-private partnerships, there is a growing body of recent literature citing agency theory (Iossa & Martimort, 2015; Rwelamila et al., 2015; Van Buiten & Hartmann, 2015), including during the pre-solicitation phase of a project (De

Palma et al., 2012; Martimort & Pouyet, 2008). Some scholars have adopted the view that the private sector seeks to maximize profit, while the public sector aspires to maximize welfare (Miller & Whitford, 2007). This view puts public-private partnerships on a collision course of competing interests. Perhaps anticipating this line of reasoning, going back to 1983, Jensen and Ruback predicted that agency theory was not suitable to address all organizational issues. Subsequently, scholars viewed agency theory as complementary to other theories to arrive at effective outcomes (Pepper & Gore, 2015; Van Puyvelde et al., 2013). Van Puyvelde et al. (2013) observed that the principal-agent relationship existed at multiple levels within an organization, creating challenges, including difficulty measuring output. Continued research in the area of public-private partnerships may have to acknowledge a blurring of the traditional agency theory construct.

#### Resource Dependence Theory

In 1978, Pfeffer and Salancik explored how an organization's behavior was affected by the organization's external resources in what became known as the resource dependence theory. Drawing on literature dating back to Emerson (1962), Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) furthered the idea that resource dependence impacted an organization's power position and contributed to questions about resource availability, criticality, and scarcity in addition to an organization's self-sustainability, dependency, and inter-operability. Hammervoll (2005) described two dimensions to emphasize the importance of resources: the criticality of a resource and relative magnitude. Criticality was, as the name suggested, a resource necessary for organizational function (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), whereas relative magnitude correlated to external resources and the number of resources coming from a

source compared to that source's total input (Bourantas, 1989). Discretion was an organization's ability to control the allocation and use of resources, measured as either high or low discretion (Saidel, 1991). Finally, source sustainability was an organization's access to alternative sources to ensure resource supply (Iecovich, 2001). As the literature grew, so did exploration into types of resources, and authors considered a broad range of characteristics as being resources, including charisma, expertise, financial and human capital, information, reputation, size, and status (Dawson, 1996; Hardy, 1985; Pfeffer, 1981).

When applied to public-private partnerships, a key to mitigating against disruption and unpredictability of resource dependence was the necessity to manage relationships (Hilman et al., 2009). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) addressed horizontal expansion as a way to "increase an organization's power" through an "exchange relationship and to reduce uncertainty generated from competition" (p. 114). Subsequently, they observed that relationships reflected the power associated with an organization's ability to limit dependency on others and autonomously deploy resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This understanding of sources of power was consistent with Dahl's (1989) belief that a source of power could be "anything that can be used to sway the specific choices or strategies of another individual" (p. 226). Hilman et al. (2009) argued that managing relationships was necessary to mitigate against disruption and unpredictability of resource dependence. As a result, organizations could come together to secure resources critical to establishing influence, power, stability, and survival (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

## Stakeholder Theory

Freeman (1984) researched the question of who and what really counts, shifting focus from traditional shareholders to broader stakeholders. He authored the seminal work leading to stakeholder theory, in which he broadly described a stakeholder as “[a]ny group or individual who affects or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives” (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). In 2010, Freeman noted that a 1963 Stanford Research Institute project initially mentioned stakeholders in even more decisive terms as groups without whose support an organization would cease to exist. Clarkson et al. (1994) contributed with a definition of stakeholders as “entities which can and are making their actual stakes known, and, on the other end, by those which are or might be influenced by, or are or potentially are influencers of, some organization or another, whether or not this influence is perceived or known” (p. 90). An evolving broader assessment was that stakeholders frequently had complex relationships, competing interests, contradictory viewpoints, independent networks, and incompatible ways of conducting themselves (Waayers et al., 2012; Waligo et al., 2013). Further research supported the position that long-term organizational sustainability required cooperation by stakeholders affected by economic and social impacts (Gingerich, 2010; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012; Werhane et al., 2011). In addition, empirical research demonstrated value derived from positive stakeholder relationships when measured by project cost and increased public trust (Greenwood & Van Buren, 2010; Tse, 2011).

Mitchell et al. (1997) attempted to identify stakeholders and measure their salience, i.e., a stakeholder’s primacy in a relationship. The authors explained that “the question of

stakeholder salience ... goes beyond the question of stakeholder identification because the dynamics inherent in each relationship involve complex considerations that are not readily explained by the stakeholder framework as it currently stands” (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 854). They applied legitimacy, power, and urgency attributes to stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997). Legitimacy was the concept that a stakeholder’s actions were desirable among the various relations in society. The concept confirmed Suchman’s (1995) view of legitimacy as a perception or assumption that a stakeholder’s actions were appropriate or desirable within the beliefs, norms, and values of the social system in which they are operating. Power was a stakeholder’s ability to “impose its will in the relationship” (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 865). Urgency reflected the immediacy of a request along with the importance to the stakeholder. The authors identified legitimacy and power as static attributes and urgency as an added catalytic and dynamic component. They asserted that: 1. stakeholder attributes were variable; 2. stakeholder attributes were not objective reality but rather social constructs; and 3. stakeholders might or might not exercise power consciously or willfully in the process (Mitchell et al., 1997).

Later, Freeman (1999) addressed stakeholder collaboration as contributing to the likelihood of a stable agreement by explaining that singular stakeholders who lacked some of the Mitchell et al. (1997) stakeholder attributes could garner cumulative power by allying to increase overall salience. Freeman (1999) also addressed collaboration, looking at cases where stakeholders joined interests to increase their power. Stakeholder collaboration was “working with partners to leverage existing resources to provide maximum strategic benefit” (Hardy et al., 2003, p. 325). Stakeholder collaboration was

present when “a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engaged in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to the domain” (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146).

Similarly, the concept of stakeholder multiplicity arose from stakeholder theory (Neville & Menguc, 2006; Rawlins, 2006). Multiplicity was the complex interactions among and between stakeholders and “the degree of multiple, conflicting, complementary, or cooperative claims stakeholders make to organizations” (Neville & Menguc, 2006, p. 377). In addition, multiplicity included the view that (a) stakeholder groups may compete or compliment each other, (b) stakeholders may form strategic alliances or cooperatives, and (c) stakeholder roles determined levels of influence over other stakeholders (Neville & Menguc, 2006).

Stakeholder theory is the subject of much scholarly debate (Freeman et al., 2010), and some scholars have concluded that stakeholder theory is not one theory “but a genre of theories with some common themes” (Barney & Harrison, 2020, p. 3). The theory has diverged into many different research themes, including corporate planning, corporate social responsibility, organizational theory, and systems theory (Freeman, 2010). Recently, Pedrini and Ferri (2019) applied literature related to stakeholder theory development, execution, and outcomes to specific stakeholder dynamics, including assessing, engaging, influencing, and managing. Stakeholder theory is inherently applicable to the study of public-private partnerships in the pre-solicitation phase because stakeholders coming together, or not, is a fundamental requirement to succeed.

## Integration of Agency Theory and Stakeholder Theory

A compelling recent trend in literature integrates aspects of agency theory with stakeholder theory. Van Puyvelde et al. (2012) explored this extensively in the context of non-profit organizations and their management. A similar application to public-private partnerships is appropriate due to the collaborative organizational nature of both. Table 2.2 is an adaptation of a table by Van Puyvelde et al. (2012), citing Davis et al. (1997) and Sundaramurthy and Lewis (2003). This table highlights historical differences between agency theory and stakeholder theory to illustrate an evolution toward integrating the theories applicable to public-private partnerships.

Table 2.2. Dimensions of Agency Theory and Stakeholder Theory  
for Purposes of Integration

Dimension	Agency theory	Stakeholder theory
Theoretical basis	Economics	Psychology and sociology
Approach	Control / Distrust	Collaboration / Trust
Principal-agent relationship	Goal conflict	Goal alignment
Actor's motivation	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Organizational engagement	Low	High
Human behavior	Individualist	Collectivist
Governance mechanisms	Monitoring and incentives	Empowering structures

Source: Adapted from Van Puyvelde et al. (2013); based on Davis et al. (1997) and Sundaramurthy & Lewis (2003)

Collaborative arrangements can make identifying a principal and an agent difficult (Brody, 1996; Miller, 2002). Similarly, stakeholders have shifting and evolving interests and rarely have identical objectives (Balsler & McClusky, 2005). In their 2012 work, Van

Puyvelde et al. use the term “integrating” in the title, and they developed a framework through stakeholder theory that identified multiple principal-agent relationships. Citing works by Eisenhardt (1989) and Steinberg (2010), Van Puyvelde et al. (2012) conclude that the presence of multiple principals with different objectives indicated it is appropriate to “complement agency theory with other theoretical perspectives” (p. 432).

### **Stakeholder Dynamics in Public-Private Partnerships**

A public-private partnership can be accurately categorized as a “group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage[d] in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146). This section explores more deeply what many scholars have broadly described as stakeholder dynamics, using the subset terms stakeholder assessment, stakeholder engagement, stakeholder influence, and stakeholder management. The literature reveals a variety of sometimes overlapping names and concepts such as stakeholder dynamics (Aaltonen et al., 2008); stakeholder engagement (Greenwood, 2007; Strand & Freeman, 2015); stakeholder involvement (Frooman, 1999; Hendry, 2005); and stakeholder response (Aaltonen & Sivonen, 2009; De Schepper et al., 2014; Savage et al., 1991). Other authors have described a process to (a) identify stakeholders, (b) identify interests, legitimacy, power, resources, urgency, (c) examine stakeholder dynamics, (d) evaluate stakeholder impact, (e) explore how to manage expectations and influence, (f) prioritize stakeholder demands, (g) develop organizational responses, and (h) control and monitor stakeholder management (Bunn et al., 2002; Cleland, 1999; Preble, 2005).

Renz and Andersson (2013) addressed the issue of unifying stakeholder notions by referring to a “body of work further conceptualizing and studying what has come to be known as ‘stakeholder work’” (p. 5). Renz and Andersson (2013) referred to Lee and Mitchell (2013), who synthesized literature “according to a logic which asserts . . . five primary research streams in stakeholder literature” and arrived at a definition of “stakeholder work as the purposive processes of organizations aimed at identifying, understanding, being aware of, prioritizing, and acting with respect to stakeholders” (p. 212). Lee and Mitchell (2013) explained that theirs was not a new idea but a “new conceptualization of compatible ideas to better connect the five previously distinct stakeholder-centric research streams...” (p. 212). More recently, Renz et al. (2019), citing Mitchell et al. (2017), referred to four phases of stakeholder work: awareness, identification, prioritization, and engagement.

For purposes of this literature review, the reference to stakeholder dynamics includes elements of stakeholder work and goes beyond the organization’s perspective to include the stakeholders’ perspective, e.g., the stakeholders’ ability to influence the process and outcome. Scholars agree on the importance of assessing the impact stakeholders have on helping or hindering the achievement of a project or objective (Phillips, 2003; Savage et al., 1991). Table 2.3. illustrates the distinctions with a short list of relevant literature highlighting stakeholder dynamics in the context of public projects and construction-related problems, refining various terms such as stakeholder concerns, expectations, influence, and public participation.

Table 2.3. Examples of Literature Related to Stakeholder Dynamics

Dynamic	Findings	Author
Assessing	A firm's mission statement may assess certain stakeholder groups, e.g., employees, customers, and community, but that does not affect stakeholder behavior.	Bartkus and Glassman (2007)
Assessing	Improving strategy development by assessing stakeholder interests in the program planning phase.	Boerner and Jobst (2011)
Assessing	The development of a theoretical framework improved overall strategy and project development to help link stakeholders to each other.	Minoja (2012)
Assessing	Increased stakeholder stakeholders and stakeholder engagement during the project's lifecycle due to management proactively assessing key stakeholders and establishing strategies.	Pacagnella Junior et al. (2015)
Engaging	A structured process of stakeholder engagement led to the development of timely, appropriate, and effective communication.	Bourne (2011)
Engaging	Engaged stakeholders increased the data and information provided to support decision-making in natural resource management.	Harrison and Qureshi (2000)
Influencing	Stakeholder online discussions were amplified by proactively engaging during the planning stages of a public project.	Williams et al. (2015)
Influencing	The awareness and application of Confucianist teaching to stakeholder theory influenced stakeholder inclusion.	Wu and Wokutch (2015)
Influencing	The development of an innovative communication strategy and resources for stakeholders increased their influence.	Guo and Saxton (2014)
Managing	Indian firms frequently included stakeholder management strategies consistent with teachings from ancient Indian scriptures.	Shah and Bhaskar (2008)
Managing	A case study into stakeholder management by a soccer team revealed a lack of opportunities by stakeholders in the decision-making process.	Walters (2011)
Managing	Cooperative interactions in stakeholder management could turn to competitive interactions if the relationship became overwhelmingly rule-governed.	Foo (2007)

Source: Adapted from Pedrini and Ferri, 2019.

### Stakeholder Assessment

Assessment is a broad dynamic, addressed differently by different scholars (Agle et al., 1999; Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010; Freeman, 2010). Freeman (2010) identified two approaches to stakeholder assessment: (a) internal stakeholder versus external stakeholder

perspective, and (b) primary stakeholder versus secondary stakeholder. Internal and external referred to the stakeholders' proximity relative to the overall activities, e.g., owners and managers compared with employees and customers. Primary and secondary referred to stakeholders' influence, e.g., government and regulators as primary compared with interest groups and the media as secondary. At its core, from a practitioner's perspective, assessment should include identifying, classifying, and assessing stakeholders in a project (Project Management Institute, 2008). The dynamic remains relevant in current academic research partly because of practitioners' difficulty making stakeholder assessments (Mok et al., 2015).

Mitchell et al. (1997) informed leaders and decision-makers on how stakeholders interacted, what interactions were relevant, and why. Drawing on this to assess stakeholder salience, the authors identified eight classes of stakeholders with different combinations of attributes in the salience typology: dormant, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dangerous, dependent, and definitive. They were summarized as follows: (a) Dormant – power without legitimacy or urgency, (b) Discretionary – legitimacy without power or urgency, (c) Demanding – urgency without legitimacy or power, (d) Dominant – legitimacy and power without urgency, (e) Dangerous – power and urgency in a dangerous combination without legitimacy, (f) Dependent – legitimacy and urgency without power, (g) Definitive – legitimacy, power, and urgency, and (h) Non stakeholder – no attributes.

Mitchell et al. (1997) developed their theory and formed the eight classes to help explain competing demands of various stakeholders who possessed stakeholder attributes

in different strengths and combinations, as illustrated in Figure 2.3, using a Venn diagram to show the three attributes (Mitchell et al., 1997).

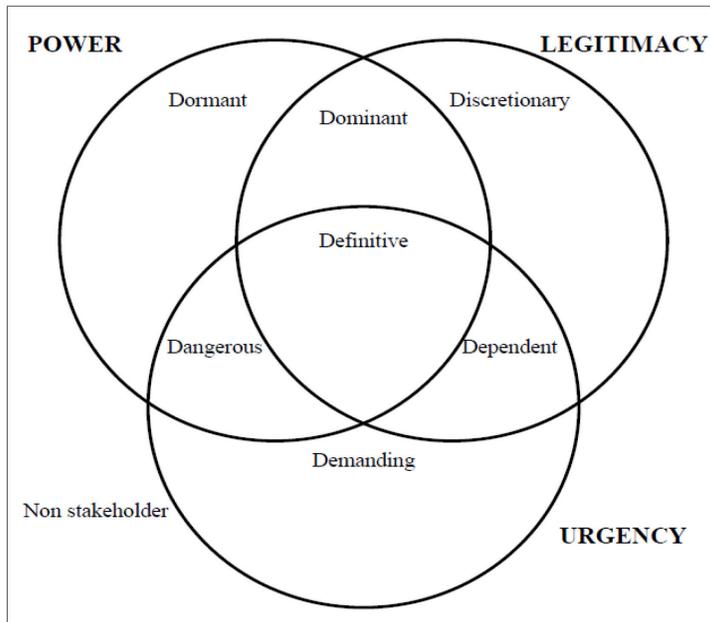


Figure 2.3. Stakeholder Typology: One, Two, or Three Attributes Present  
Source: Mitchell et al., 1997.

Consistent with this, Newcombe (2003) argued that stakeholders must be assessed to establish “the strategic importance of stakeholder groups” that “helps organizations determine what the nature of their stakeholder management strategy should be” (p. 844). Mitchell et al. (1997) described stakeholder salience as “the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims” (p. 854). Salience has been identified as a significant factor in understanding and assessing stakeholders in public-private partnerships (Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005). Other scholars built on the work of Mitchell et al. (1997). For example, Ballejos and Montagna (2011) applied a stakeholder interest matrix to complex information systems design where multiple organizations interacted, a complex

project with characteristics similar to large-scale public works projects. Some scholars suggested adding another stakeholder attribute, sometimes described as proximity, i.e., near and far in terms of physical distance, time, and likelihood (Driscoll & Starik, 2004). Kirat and Lung (1999) classified the attribute of proximity as institutional, organizational, and geographic. Torre and Rallet (2005) described the attribute of proximity as geographical and organizational. Proximity is an attribute relevant to public-private partnership participation by stakeholders.

Donaldson and Preston (1995) addressed the question of stakeholders by distinguishing them from influencers, arguing that some stakeholders have no influence, and some influencers have no stake. De Schepper et al. (2014) looked at public-private partnerships specifically to create a stakeholder involvement identification matrix that contributed to stakeholder context and dynamics. Using the cases of complex nuclear projects, Aaltonen et al. (2015) created a salience/position matrix to assess changes in stakeholder importance and position by classifying degrees of salience from low to high and degree of supportiveness from unsupportive to highly supportive. This matrix captured attributes and power to help create a better picture of stakeholder perspective, position, and persuadability.

Yang (2014) identified stakeholders by their interests and prioritized them based on two perspectives, empiricism and rationalism. The analysis was established on a belief that stakeholders were interdependent, and their behavior reflected relationship patterns within a network structure (Wasserman & Galaskiewicz, 1994). Jonker and Foster (2002) applied their elements of “rationality, criticality, and power” (p. 194) to build on Mitchell et al.

(1997) with elements influencing the outcomes of the components of a relationship. In Figure 2.4, Jonker and Foster (2002) addressed criticality, power, and rationality to operationalize the categories set out by Mitchel et al. (1997), i.e., legitimacy, power, and urgency.

<b>COMPONENTS OF THE RELATIONSHIP</b>					
<b>ELEMENTS INFLUENCING THE OUTCOMES OF THE RELATIONSHIP</b>		<b>Stake</b> [What are the key issues in the relationship?]	<b>Parties</b> [Who or what are involved?]	<b>Process</b> [What processes are involved in managing the relationship?]	<b>Connections</b> [What form do the connections between the organisation and the stakeholders take?]
	<b>Power</b>	Does the nature of the claim or stake have implications for the type of power involved?	What type of power do the parties involve use [if required] to obtain a result?	Do some processes result in the exercise of different types of power?	What effects does the form of connections have on the form of power used? OR Is power exercised directly or indirectly?
	<b>Criticality</b>	Why is the interest or stake worth investing time and effort on?	What is it about the attributes, behaviour, attitudes or beliefs of the parties that makes the issue critical [i.e. important enough to engage]?	Are the processes important to the on-going life [operations] of the parties? Is it central to the decision-making process?	How critical or important do each party regard the connections?
	<b>Rationality</b>	How is the interest or stake expressed [cognitive, social or personal]?	What are the epistemological and ontological perspectives of the parties and how do they influence their view of the issue or interest?	Do the processes and procedures affect the opportunity for the understanding based on a broad or narrow conceptualisation of rationality?	Does the form of the connection encourage or discourage dialogue rather than egocentric claims?

Figure 2.4. Components of the Relationship and Elements Influencing the Outcome of the Relationship

Source: Jonker and Foster, 2002, p. 194)

## Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement, sometimes called involvement or participation, is viewed through the lens of those in decision-making positions to communicate to, further involvement of, and improve relationships with stakeholders (Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2008; Greenwood, 2007). Engagement has been described as increasing stakeholder knowledge through basic information, whereas participation is a higher level of engagement (Deegan & Parkin, 2001). Engagement overall is implemented to promote a transparent decision-making process by engaging stakeholders to provide more input and be more involved in the process (Cascetta et al., 2015). By sharing their opinions with individuals in decision-making positions, engaged stakeholders can influence a project and are crucial in project success (Turner & Zolin, 2012). Active engagement of both internal and external stakeholders, especially during the planning phases, diminished adverse effects and reduced the potential for conflict in the later phases (Zidane et al., 2015).

Numerous frameworks appear in the literature regarding engagement. Henriksen and Barlebo (2008) proposed a seven-step approach that included (a) defining the context, (b) identifying the actions, indicators, and factors, (c) building pilot networks, (d) collecting data, (e) defining government entities, (f) developing a probabilities table, and (g) collecting feedback from stakeholders.

As illustrated below in Figure 2.5., Luyet et al. (2012) studied the case of an environmental project to propose a stakeholder engagement framework that included the following similar steps (a) stakeholder identification, (b) stakeholder characterization,

(c) stakeholder structuration and degree of involvement, (d) participatory techniques, (e) implementing participatory techniques, and (f) evaluation.

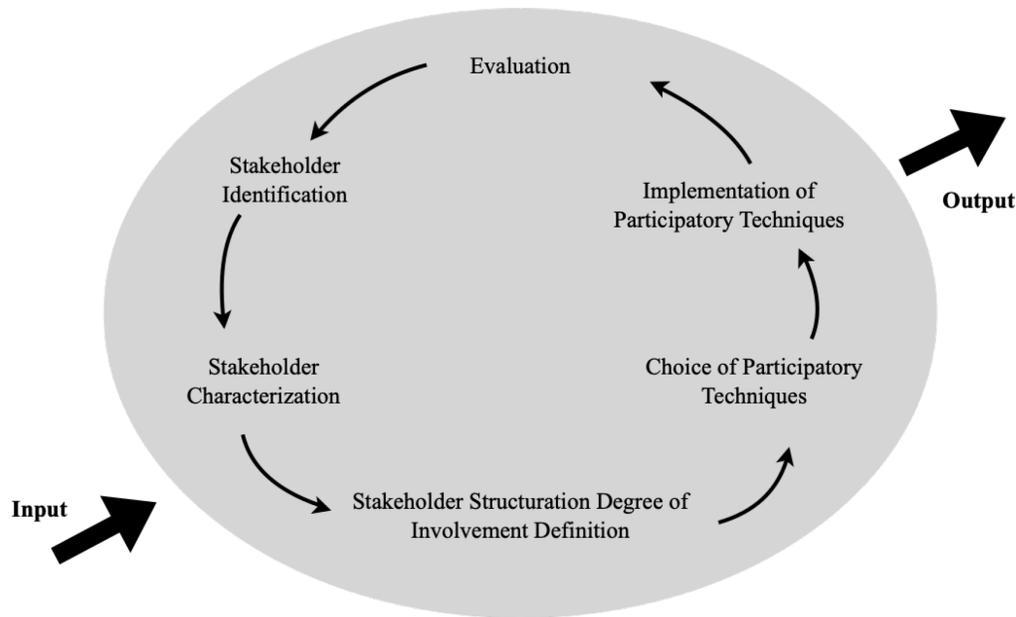


Figure 2.5. Framework for Implementing Stakeholder Engagement  
Source: Luyet et al., 2012

### Stakeholder Influence

As seen from the stakeholder's perspective, influence was the stakeholders' strategy to maximize the opportunities that their interests and objectives would be considered in the decision-making process (Aaltonen et al., 2008; Frooman, 1999; Hendry 2005). Frooman (1999) described stakeholder influence strategies as stakeholder means, i.e., the means by which stakeholders were going to try to get what they wanted. Mitchell et al. (1997) acknowledged that strategies such as these were relevant to stakeholder influence and salience. Relying on resource dependence theory, Frooman (1999) established four types of stakeholder influence strategies: withholding, usage, direct, and indirect. Building on

this, strategies identified by Aaltonen et al. (2008) included communication, coalition building, conflict escalation, credibility building, direct action, and resource building. Stakeholder influence from the stakeholder's perspective garners less literature than stakeholder dynamics from the perspective of the organization. However, in a collaborative effort such as a public-private partnership, stakeholder influence intuitively has an outsized impact, particularly in the pre-solicitation phase.

### Stakeholder Management

Viewed from the perspective of the manager, organization, or project leader, stakeholder management is an active strategy that adjusts to stakeholder salience and is adopted to impact the level of stakeholder salience (Aaltonen et al., 2015; Olander & Landin, 2005). A study from the *International Journal of Project Management* identified that “a trust-building project manager must be able to instill a robust system of care for the stakeholders and team members” (Wong et al., 2008, p. 821).

Two other approaches emerged in the literature to managing stakeholder relationships, referred to as bridging and buffering (Freeman & McVea, 2011). Bridging attempted to establish common action and attitude among stakeholders, thereby forming partnerships (Elias, 2016). Buffering established barriers to limit the effect and influence of stakeholders (Harrison & St. John, 1996). Stakeholder management has been widely regarded as essential at the early stages of a project, such as the pre-solicitation phase, and has an inordinate impact on a project's success (Cleland, 1999; Olander & Landin, 2005). Burbury (2001) added that a lack of proposal or project momentum could be linked to a

failure to draw in stakeholders at the early stages, highlighting the importance of stakeholder management as a dynamic.

De Schepper et al. (2014) developed four approaches in the context of public-private partnerships: collaborate, exclude, inform, and involve. These approaches depended on the power and urgency possessed by stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997). Similarly, Pacagnella Junior et al. (2015) identified collaborating, defending, involving, and monitoring strategies. Other approaches to stakeholder management were outlined by Harrison and St. John (1996) and are illustrated in Figure 2.6.

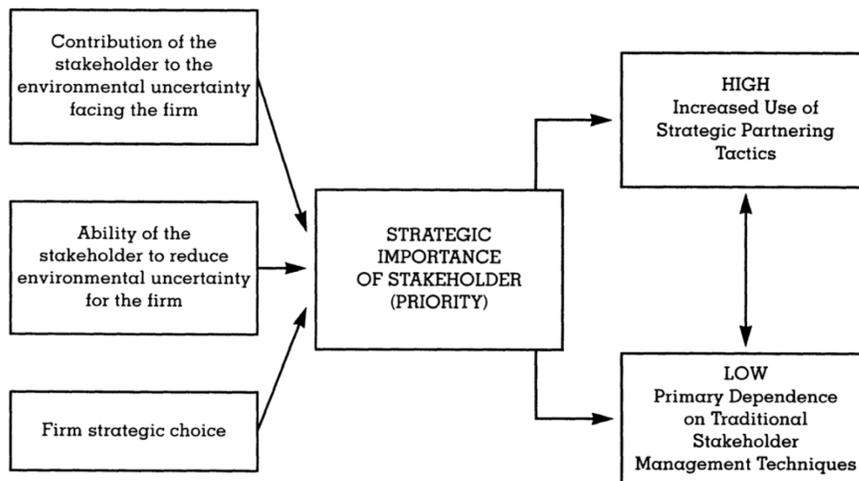


Figure 2.6. Factors Influencing Strategic Importance and Approaches to Managing Stakeholders

Source: Harrison and St. John, 1996

### **Power in the Pre-solicitation Phase of a Public-Private Partnership**

Understanding power in the pre-solicitation phase is essential because projects at this early stage are highly susceptible to ambiguity, dynamic stakeholder interaction, and extraordinary levels of uncertainty (Florichel & Miller, 2001; Miller & Lessard, 2000).

There is no shortage of literature on the subject of power. In 1947, Weber addressed power in and around organizations from a top-down perspective when he identified three types of power in hierarchical structures: formal, traditional, and charismatic. Dahl (1957) explained power as relational between two individuals in which participant A could influence participant B into an action that, absent A's influence, B would not have done. French and Raven (1959) explored relational power and identified bases of power as follows: coercive power, expert power, legitimate power, referential power, and reward power. They determined that the scope of each basis was limited, and the scope of one basis of power might not work where another basis of power was required. Etzioni (1975) applied the French and Raven (1959) bases of power to organizational systems. He arrived at three bases of power: reward, referential, and coercive. Finally, Kanter (1994) looked through the lens of power bases to study leadership failures in organizations. She found that for an organization and organizational leadership to be successful, the leaders must exploit the different bases of power, for example, by rewarding power that directly impacted productivity and power that created high *esprit de corps* and support for leadership (Kanter, 1994).

Much of the early literature on the bases of power was premised on power as an absolute and a neutral, to be attained and applied by any and all on a level playing field that could be observed clearly and objectively. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) were skeptical about any scholarly ability to view power in action, instead characterizing power as having a visible face and an invisible face. The assumption arising out of the Bachrach and Baratz (1962) research was that the participant exercising power must have an identity, ideology,

norms, and values that were inconsistent with the participant upon whom power was exercised, so the only possible action was that the participant upon whom power was exercised must bend or break to the will of the participant who was exercising it. Lukes (1974) built on this understanding to illustrate the hidden face of power as the third face or dimension. This three-dimensional view of power in society placed decision-making power on one dimension, visible power or non-decision-making power on a second dimension, and the hidden face of power, invisible or ideological, on a third dimension, as illustrated in Table 2.4. The hidden or invisible face was a participant's ability to affect the personal preferences of other participants by affecting norms and values, assigning meaning to language, and pre-determining outcomes through the influence over ideology and identity (Lukes, 1974). This theme continued to suggest that power existed in all relationships, including in and around organizations, reflecting the organizational culture and communications (Clegg, 1981; Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003).

Table 2.4. Three Dimensional Views of Power

	<b>One-dimensional View of Power</b>	<b>Two-dimensional View of Power</b>	<b>Three-dimensional View of Power</b>
<b>Theoretical view:</b>	Pluralist	Two faces of power	Radical
<b>Type of power:</b>	Exercise of actual power	Exercise of actual power or Exercise of power by confining the scope of decision-making	Exercise of power by influencing, shaping or determining perceptions and preferences
<b>Observe power via:</b>	Overt conflict	Overt or covert conflict	Overt or covert conflict and latent conflict
<b>Key theories:</b>	Dahl (1957)	Bachrach and Baratz (1962)	Lukes (1974)

Source: Adapted from Lukes, 1974, p. 25

Dennis Wrong (2017) categorized power as coercive, competent, induced, and legitimate based on social relationships. Wrong described coercive power as:

[F]or A to obtain B's compliance by threatening him with force, B must be convinced of both A's capability and willingness to use force against him. A may have succeeded in convincing B of both by advertising and displaying the means and instruments of force that [it] controls. (Wrong, 2017, p. 41).

Other scholars observed that coercive power was often associated with fear (Ford, 2005; Stewart, 2001). This view was in harmony with Wrong's (2017) belief that coercive power might impede some stakeholders' collaborative process or inclusion. Government authorities use coercive power through policymaking and implementation (Airey, 2015), and this is sometimes referred to as political power (DeBussy & Kelly, 2010; Wrong, 2017). Public-private partnerships apply political power that may be coercive because political actors or government authorities who answer to political actors frequently represent the public side of the partnership.

Competent power was a type of power where specialists or experts in specific fields possessed the requisite knowledge to solve complex problems or accommodate stakeholder needs in collaboration (Hankinson, 2009). This theme followed previous studies by Mechanic (1962), who explored power exercised by lower authority stakeholders with expertise. Similarly, Crozier (1964) studied bureaucracies and highlighted the use of expertise to gain additional power. Pfeffer (1981) further examined stakeholder work and noted that the power possessed by repair workers was not commensurate with their pay or positional authority, but rather their power had outsized influence because the repair

workers had unique skills that were important to the operations and difficult to replicate. With competent power, “authority can be ascribed to knowledge and to branches of knowledge; and a person may be called an authority on something that [they] knows about” (Watt, 1982, p. 45). Sources of competent power included special skills, knowledge, and experiences limited to particular organizations or stakeholders (Timur & Getz, 2008). There are areas where competent power is critical to success in the public-private context, such as creating legal and financial structures and terms.

Induced power involved material rewards used by one stakeholder to derive power from another stakeholder (Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; DeBussy & Kelly, 2010). Wrong (2017) described induced power as characterizing “relationships in which one party submits ‘voluntarily’ to the [power holder's] commands in return for economic rewards well above sheer subsistence needs” (p. 45). In contrast to coercive power that involved threatening deprivations, induced power was a positive reinforcement to entice another stakeholder's obedience by offering rewards for compliance with a command (Wrong, 2017). Stakeholders with considerable financial resources were seen as being in the best position to induce power because induced power was often associated with remunerations (Raven, 1993). A vital element of a public-private partnership is private financing, highlighting the ability to induce, and therefore the possible establishment and existence of induced power.

By contrast, Wrong (2017) viewed legitimate power when “the power holder possesses an acknowledged right to command and the power subject an acknowledged obligation to obey” (p. 49). Legitimate power was also seen as “the right to another's

compliance with directives that fall within the scope of that authority, regardless of the other's feelings” (Ford & Johnson, 1998, p.18). Astley and Sachdeva (1984) suggested that legitimate power was often associated with social norms or formal position within society. Public officials may exploit legitimate power if they are seen as inherently legitimate by their position, particularly at the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership.

Early on, Weber (1947) distinguished between power and authority and explained that power was what one in a superior position exercised, but that authority arose from power when the stakeholder was viewed as legitimate by those over whom power was exercised. Parsons defined authority as “the institutional code within which the use of power is organized and legitimized” (1963, p. 243). Cohen and Bradford (2005) went further to illustrate influence in the absence of authority, setting out guidance for influencers to 1. assume all other persons or groups are potential allies; 2. clarify goals and priorities; 3. diagnose factors affecting allies, including what shapes their concerns, goals, and needs; 4. assess what is valued by prospective allies and yourself, referred to by the authors as currency; 5. determine how the ally views you and prefers to be treated; and 6. commit to an approach and make the exchange. The authors wrote that a failure to address any of the elements of their model, shown below in Figure 2.7, created barriers to the successful completion of a proposal (Cohen & Bradford, 2005).

A public-private partnership's multi-stakeholder and collaborative reality lays the foundation for known and unknown influencers in the process, particularly at the dynamic pre-solicitation phase. Cohen and Bradford (2005) talk of currencies that consist of “currencies frequently valued by organizations” (p. 70). These include inspiration-related

currencies such as vision, excellence, moral/ethical correctness; task-related currencies like new resources, organizational support, rapid response; position-related currencies of recognition, reputation, and contacts; relationship-related currencies like understanding and support; and personal-related currencies such as gratitude and comfort. Cohen and Bradford (2005) studied the value and application of such currencies in a way that is informative to stakeholder influence in a public-private partnership pre-solicitation phase.

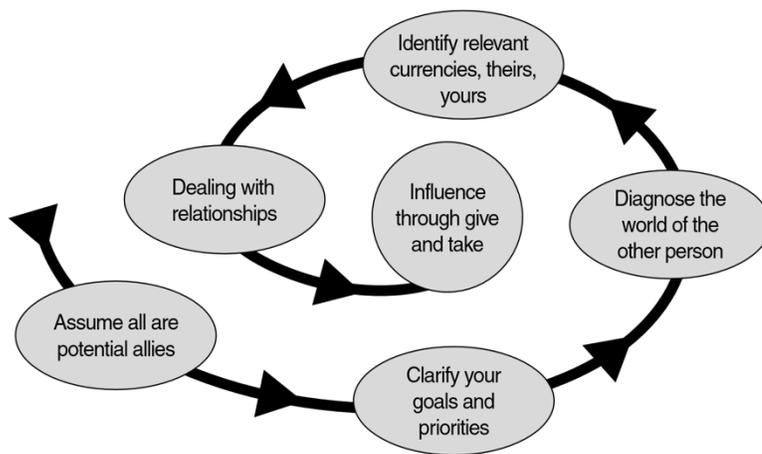


Figure 2.7. Summary of the Cohen-Bradford Model of Influence Without Authority  
 Source: Cohen and Bradford, 2005, p. 61

Building on Sager’s (1994) description of persuasion as “argumentation intended to make the respondent adapt to the opinion of the controller” (p. 72). Cialdini (2001) researched power and developed six basic laws of or fundamental principles to persuade others to act or change their actions. These laws or principles included what Cialdini (2001) called: authority, commitment and consistency, liking, reciprocity, scarcity, and social proof.

Authority was intuitive, even as it reached beyond structural chains of command to persuade participants to act contrary to logical reasoning or moral beliefs. Commitment

and consistency applied when an actor acted even when the initial conditions for acting had changed, and the action may no longer have been beneficial in the same way or at all.

Liking was a technique whereby an actor simply made herself likable and liked by those she was trying to influence. Reciprocity, as explained by Cialdini (2001), was similar to the “log-rolling” effect, in that Actor A acted in a way favorable to Actor B because of the belief that there would be a future benefit to Actor A in return. Finally, scarcity indicated a decision-maker had limited time and resources to decide, and as a result, the ability to persuade that decision-maker increased. All these principles can be on display in a public-private partnership. However, Cialdini (2001) wrote that in situations where there was less certainty, social proof helped persuade a decision-maker, i.e., where an actor was persuaded not only by the merits but also by evidence of other people behaving similarly.

In the collaboration context, such as a public-private partnership, Jill Purdy (2012) observed that challenges abound when applying power because projects such as public-private partnerships are “ambiguous, complex contexts in which participants, social structures, and processes can change rapidly” (p. 410). She examined three arenas of power: a participation arena, a process arena, and a content arena, and applied sources of power, including authority, discursive legitimacy, and resources. A pre-solicitation phase takes in apparent aspects of the participation arena and the process arena. Authors Christina, Loosemore, and Newton (2016) explored power interests among participants as applied to public-private partnerships specifically, citing the reality that public-private partnerships “are typically large, complex and controversial projects which have significant environmental and social impacts on the communities in which they are built” (p. 904).

Reflecting the research of Purdy (2012) and Christina et al. (2016), other scholars have identified the pre-solicitation phase as needing further study in the area of power due to its uncertainty, complexity, and particularly vulnerability (Florice & Miller, 2001; Miller & Lessard, 2000).

### **Summary**

The level of awareness and interest in pursuing public-private partnerships is increasing in the United States and worldwide. Partnerships are frequently established to address complex construction and public works projects, and this approach garners significant attention because of the public participation and the fact that many of the projects are for high profile, high-cost public use facilities. However, the literature illustrates that the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership is particularly vulnerable to ambiguity, dynamic stakeholder interaction, and high levels of uncertainty, deserving of further study (Florice & Miller, 2001; Kolltveit & Gronhaug, 2004; Miller & Lessard, 2000). Public-private partnerships are also distinct from traditional government procurement, particularly regarding stakeholder dynamics.

Scholars have applied theoretical approaches to stakeholders for decades. Freeman (1984) asked who and what really counts. Mitchell et al. (1997) questioned stakeholder salience, i.e., primacy in a relationship. These fundamental questions continue to have a profound role in studying public-private partnerships at the pre-solicitation phase.

Traditional government procurement relied on principal-agent relationships. Public-private partnerships are unusual, and their dynamics by definition blurs the traditional agency theory dating back to Jensen and Meckling (1976).

More recent scholarship in non-profit management and collaborative governance has particular relevance to public-private partnerships, and research suggests multiple principal-agent relationships within organizations (Van Puyvelde et al., 2013). Theoretical perspectives continue to evolve and become more applicable in many ways to understand public-private partnerships as more complex, multidimensional, and nuanced structures. This suggests the need for further study into integrating theories beyond the current body of knowledge to expand our understanding of stakeholders and social power related to public-private partnerships in the pre-solicitation phase.

The contribution of this empirical study reveals theoretical impacts and managerial implications. Contributions to stakeholder management research include classifying stakeholders on a salience typology through the application of coding techniques of archival material and interview transcripts, as well as identifying organizing trends among highly salient stakeholders as rated by peer stakeholders.

Identifying organizing trends enhances an understanding of how to recognize, assess, and manage project specific intra-organizational stakeholder power. This issue has not been thoroughly addressed in prior work on the pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnerships, and the insights provided through this research enhance in-depth understanding. Therefore, the present study contributes to project stakeholder management research by addressing this knowledge gap and providing a comprehensive account of classifications, self versus peer power ratings, and power shifts over the timeline of the process.

Additionally, the initial findings regarding the inconsistent power ratings when measuring self-assessment compared with peer-assessment suggests the need for continued study and stakeholder management awareness. When applying refined bases of power through the administration of worksheet data, highly salient stakeholders who participated in the research showed a consistent over-assessment of favorable characteristics, e.g., competence and legitimacy, and an under-assessment of unfavorable characteristics, e.g., coercion and inducement.

Chapter Three will lay out the methodology used in this case study to address the research questions and aid in understanding stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation stage of a public-private partnership.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The case of the airport new terminal proposal presents an opportunity to better understand stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a high profile, a high-dollar public-private partnership that moved from the announcement of a no-bid, unsolicited proposal with private financing to a full and open competition with public financing in just 10 weeks. Chapter Three sets out the rationale for a case study approach and the methods employed to answer the research questions. First, I describe the how the research design aligns with the research questions through proper data collection, and participant selection. Then I explain the rationale, management of the data as well as coding, data analysis, and data collection. Next, I support specifics regarding data management, coding and data preparation, and data analysis. Finally, this chapter concludes by examining the research's validity, reliability, and ethical considerations.

#### **Research Questions**

The research questions are:

RQ1. Who are the salient stakeholders during the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership, in what ways are those stakeholders salient, and how does their salience change over time?

RQ2. What are the forms of social power exercised by salient stakeholders, including its nature and degree?

RQ3. How do the salient stakeholders exercise their social power, and how does their social power evolve over the course of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership?

RQ4. What are the implications of the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders over time?

RQ5. How does the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders influence the effectiveness or success of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership?

### **Research Design**

Governments are increasingly looking to public-private partnerships, particularly for large-scale public works projects, which raises questions about stakeholder social power, particularly in the pre-solicitation phase of these projects, and the potential for exclusion of some stakeholders and the domination of others. I employed a qualitative study design utilizing a single case study methodology to explore a single case extensively. I researched the airport new terminal proposal and process, a \$963,937,423 public-private partnership, to maximize the investigation and understand the phenomena of stakeholder salience and social power.

Yin (2013) suggested that case study design was appropriate when descriptive or explanatory ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions were to be considered, particularly when the focus of the case study was on a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context. The new terminal proposal also had the benefit of being bound by time and activity. Yin (2018) suggested a single-case design when a study represented a unique situation or had a revelatory nature. The new terminal proposal was a revelatory situation because of the surprise disclosure of

a no-bid, unsolicited proposal on May 12, 2017. After the disclosure, stakeholders in the proposal and the project became more apparent, their salience took shape, and the exercise of power was on full display.

Data analysis for this single case study was systematic, open-ended, and inductive. By employing this type of data analysis, the research achieved a continual unfolding of the inquiry, creating a clearer and richer understanding of the theoretical applications impacting the new terminal public-private partnership procurement and a graphic representation of the concepts and issues arising out of the case.

### Setting

The setting for this study, the airport new terminal proposal, afforded a location and situation that had the potential to influence not only the local economy but also had implications for review and approval of government procurement generally and public-private partnerships specifically. The airport is a 50-year-old facility locally regarded as a landmark, but it was designed and constructed in a different era of air travel and security expectations. During the time from the announcement of a no-bid, unsolicited proposal with private financing on May 12, 2017, until the submission of bids to the RFP in a full and open competition by four development teams on July 18, 2017, the endeavor was riddled with controversy and news coverage that exposed organizational challenges, partnership struggles, and process concerns with far-reaching implications. The public-private partnership's outcome was inextricably bound to many stakeholders' economic, political, and reputational fortunes and, arguably, the entire community. The economy would be affected by the expenditure of over \$1 billion and the creation of thousands of

jobs. The political and reputational landscape included a current mayor and numerous future candidates for mayor, a city manager serving at the pleasure of a discordant counsel, a newspaper in distress, and development teams eyeing one of the most significant infrastructure projects in the history of the area.

### **Data Collection**

I used multiple data sources, including publicly available archival information, informant semi-structured interviews with those who had direct knowledge of the airport new terminal proposal, and worksheet data collection from informants. The data collection phase was from July 2020 to September 2021 and utilized these multiple data sources to enhance data credibility, which is a hallmark of the case study methodology (Patton, 2009; Yin, 2009). In addition, I employed triangulating the multiple data sources to validate the research study (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). As per Patton (2002), this allowed me to capture the key themes that emerged via the artifacts and interviews regarding the observations related to the new terminal proposal.

### **Archival Documents**

I retrieved, reviewed, and analyzed archival documents germane to the new terminal proposal and project using search terms specific to airport, terminal, and KCI. These documents included municipal enabling legislation, a foundational study entitled *Economic and Social Impact of Kansas City International Airport* (1970), citizen commission hearing reports, public ballot language regarding the airport, election results, written solicitations and proposals, memoranda of understanding, and the city's master bond ordinance. The city produced many of the documents identified for the study as part

of modernizing the airport. Creswell (2014) described these as public documents that are open and available to the public. Bowen (2009) discussed the appropriate use of official records, which is the category into which many of these documents fall.

Additionally, I analyzed over 185 news stories from five different sources, including, among others, the local newspaper, area radio and television stations, and relevant trade publications. The research included documents consistent with Wolff's (2004) observation about written texts that serve as a record or piece of evidence of an event or fact. The record analysis focused primarily on the source material as it related to the research questions. I used the document information to augment, corroborate, and crystalize evidence from other sources.

#### Interviews

Trust and rapport are essential components of successful interviews (deMarrais, 2004; Patton, 2015). I looked first to informants through purposeful sampling who had detailed knowledge and experience with the new terminal, and I have known in a professional context for several years. Taking care to follow the guidance of Kvale (2006), I utilized personal relationships in these interviews. The questions were open-ended, consistent with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) guidance to attain maximum information. Open-ended questions allowed me to conduct the interviews in a conversational style and create a climate where informants could freely relate to me as an interested colleague rather than a detached researcher.

The individuals interviewed were frequently prominent community members who were deeply involved in the new terminal, which was also high-profile and controversial.

A goal in the interviews was to move past evasion and misinformation, as described by Douglas (1976), to better answer the research questions. The objective was to understand the circumstances from the informants' point of view (Kvale, 2008). This was particularly important because interviews generally lasted between 45 and 75 minutes, with the option of engaging in follow-up interviews as needed to ensure no new relevant information was forthcoming (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I interviewed informants who had first-hand knowledge and experience with the new terminal public-private partnership proposal. Prior to the interview, I included an explanation of my study and the timeline I was researching. I did not define this timeline as the pre-solicitation phase but instead outlined events to refresh their memory of their experiences. The semi-structured questions taken from the interview guide were as follows:

1. I'd like to ask that you clue me in on what was going on at that time with regard to KCI and a new terminal. First, let me ask you: Who were the people who were most significantly involved in shaping the project at that time, and, for each, how were they involved in this? Specifically, as you saw it, who had significant influence or power (formal and informal) at that time, what form or style did that influence or power take, and how did this influence and power affect the process?
2. I jotted down a few of the names you mentioned. I'd like to go over the list with you, one by one, and ask that you walk me through how things unfolded for that person from one event to the next, over that summer. I really want to understand more about who had influence and power, how it evolved over the course of the summer, and how it affected the process.

3. (Use this question as needed to continue to investigate if additional stakeholders and information emerge.) There were some more names I picked up as you spoke. I'd like to go over those, too, and ask about how things unfolded from one event to the next to help me understand more about who else had influence and power, how that evolved over the course of the summer, and how it affected the process.

4. I'd like to ask that you to tell me about your role throughout the whole process that summer. What kinds of influence and power did you exercise (maybe formal and maybe informal), and how did it evolve over the course of events over the summer? When did you experience higher and lower levels of influence or power, and what impact did you have on the process?

4.a. As the summer progressed, did you find you had to change the way you exercised influence or power in order to impact the process?

5. As we've discussed, I'm looking at influence and power, how it is exercised, and how it evolves through the process. What else would you tell me about the power and influence dynamics of that summer and how they affected the outcome of this process?

Occasionally I ventured beyond the script to achieve greater context and content to capture the informants' deeper perspectives and perceptions (Merriam, 1998).

#### Worksheets

I created a five-page worksheet for informants to rate the perceived power of stakeholders. I delivered the worksheet by email to each informant after their interview. The worksheet allowed me to more clearly explain and extract information on four types or

bases of social power as identified by Wrong (2017). These types of power were competent, coercive, induced, and legitimate. In addition, using the worksheets gave me more detailed information from the informants that could be compared and contrasted with other informant responses and the information gleaned from archival documents and interviews. I expected worksheets would take an additional 15 minutes. In the end, of the 16 informants who participated in interviews, 11 also completed the worksheet.

### **Participant Selection**

In keeping with Creswell (2013) and the framework provided by qualitative research, I purposefully selected informants due to their firsthand knowledge and experience with the new terminal proposal. After reviewing nearly 200 archival records, I compiled a list of 18 names in a tracking log and identified them as Key Informants based on the frequency, intensity, and relevance with which they appeared in the records. These individuals had firsthand knowledge and experience that could help inform the study. Hereafter in the paper, I refer to them simply as informants unless I indicate a specific label.

My selections aligned with the qualitative sampling approach outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) for small samples of people nested in their context. Based on the research questions and the archival documents, the goal was to interview these informants and use snowball sampling by asking individual informants to tell me who else should be included in the study. Through this technique, I created an informed and refined list of “Key Stakeholders” (subsequently referred to as Highly Salient Stakeholders) that numbered 18. I started the selection of stakeholders using the broad Freeman (1984)

definition of “any group or individual who affects or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives.” I refined applying the Freeman (1984) explanation of who and what really counts to find the most influential ones in either the unsolicited proposal or the subsequent process. The term Key Stakeholders was initially presented to informants to understand what kind of information I was seeking during data collection. In this paper, for academic accuracy, I replaced the term “Key Stakeholder” with the term “Highly Salient Stakeholder,” reflecting the criteria I applied, and the data derived from interviews and the coding to identify salience attributes. Going forward in this study, I refer to Key Stakeholders and Highly Salient Stakeholders simply as stakeholders for readability, unless I must refer to a specific label or for distinction and clarification.

Given the demanding schedule of the informants, I allowed a 12-week timeline to contact them, conduct the interviews, administer the worksheets, and conclude with any follow-up questions. Informants, who ultimately included individuals from the Key Informant list and the Key Stakeholder list, were initially contacted by email or phone with an invitation to participate in the research project. This first contact included delivery by email and discussion over the phone of a formal letter titled “Invitation to Participate” (see Appendix A). If the individual indicated a willingness to consider participating, I emailed a form titled “Consent to Participate in Research” (see Appendix B). The two documents described the study in detail and explained participant expectations and risks. The Invitation to Participate, Consent to Participate in Research and the follow-on worksheet (see Appendix C) were all pre-approved by the UMKC Institutional Review Board (IRB #2023161).

Through the course of the interviews, based on snowball sampling techniques, it became clear that I should include other individuals who had been deeply involved in the proposal and process in the study. Accordingly, I identified and invited six additional individuals who were mentioned as being deeply involved in the proposal or process to participate. I sent each an email to explain the study's objective. Of the total potential population of 24 informants, eight declined or did not respond, and 16 participated in interviews to convey their recollections and impressions related to stakeholder salience and the social power they experienced and observed. The 16 informant transcripts were reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis as interviews commenced to ensure I obtained saturation after identifying repetitive themes and trends that emerged from the data collection process, as shown in Table 3.2. and discussed later in this chapter.

The 16 informants who agreed to participate represented a complete range of stakeholders. The range of stakeholders included community voices, project bidders, organized labor, elected officials, career civil servants, outside advisors and experts, and news sources. Those who declined participation were courteous and generally explained that they were not deeply involved in the pre-solicitation phase or were not at liberty to discuss the proceedings. I found that the highest number of declinations came from the construction and general contractor community. Many of these entities may have responded to the RFP, or they may have been seeking other paid work from the project. I attribute the non-participation to a concern that by participating, they might negatively impact an opportunity to bid on a city or other public projects in the future.

A handful of the individuals did not respond in any way to my requests. One consideration for a failure to respond may be general disinterest, disgust, or disappointment at how things turned out or their role in the process. Recalling events from Summer 2017, one insider said they heard the lesson from a developer that “you never see the bullet that hits you between the eyes.” Several informants said they felt the emotions of that summer returned when recalling details. One said, “It will be interesting to see somebody's perspective on it who does not have the emotional scar tissue that I have.” Another added, “So now I feel like I’m in a therapy session with you right now, so thank you,” after they described events that were widely reported in the news even though the news never reported on the informant’s role. Those who did participate spoke at length. Table 3.1. indicates the final numbers.

Table 3.1. Outreach and Participation of Key Informants

Informant Type	Number
Initially identified Key Informants	18
Initially identified Key Informants who agreed to participate	13
Initially identified Key Informants who declined	4
Initially identified Key Informant who did not respond	1
Additionally identified Key Informants	6
Additionally identified Key Informants who agreed to participate	3
Additionally identified Key Informants who declined	0
Additionally identified Key Informants who did not respond	3
Interviews conducted with Key Informants	16
Worksheets completed by Key Informants	11

## **Rationale**

As explained by Creswell (2013), a qualitative case study involves an inquiry process of “understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reported using detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (p. 15). Consistent with the emergent design characteristics of qualitative research, this study unfolds and adjusts to unpredictable characteristics such as multiple realities, differing value systems, and changing patterns of interactions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

When descriptive or explanatory "how" or "why" questions are going to be considered, Yin (2018) further suggested the appropriate use of case study design. In these situations, the researcher has limited control over events, which is even more accurate when the research focuses on a contemporary phenomenon in the context of real-life (Yin, 2018). Thus, the airport new terminal public-private partnership research is appropriate as it represents these case study elements and addresses observations and events gained from the research and possible implications and recommendations. Additionally, the research questions provide an analytical lens through which to compare and contrast variables. Variables include salience attributes such as power, urgency, and legitimacy; and bases of social power such as coercion, competence, inducement, and legitimacy.

Data collection procedures involved gaining information through archival documents, personal interviews, and worksheets relevant to the pre-solicitation process timeline described previously. I employed these procedures through a data collection phase from July 2020 to September 2021. Documents pertinent to the airport new terminal

public-private partnership were coded with a categorical summary presented. These documents included municipal enabling legislation, a foundational study entitled *Economic and Social Impact of Kansas City International Airport* (Metropolitan Planning Commission Region, 1970), citizen commission hearing reports, public ballot language regarding the airport, election results, written solicitations and proposals, memoranda of understanding, and city council committee and full council hearing transcripts. The archival documents analysis focused primarily on source material related to the research questions and was used to crystalize, corroborate, and augment evidence from other sources. Data collection continued until no new pieces of information were obtained through further investigation as demonstrated by redundancy or saturation.

Central to this research were interviews with informants who had first-hand knowledge and experience with the airport new terminal public-private partnership proposal and project. The objective was to investigate the evolution and dynamics of the public-private partnership between the city and the initial proposer, from the initial proposal through the process that led to the selection of a national private developer. The interviews helped define and assess the salience of stakeholders and were conducted with informants from a range of perspectives to ensure maximum variation and purposeful sampling. Informants included airport advisory committee members, citizens groups, former councilmembers, current councilmembers, government affairs consultants, bidders, hired experts, organized labor, city leaders, news reporters covering the events, and business leaders. The informants were identified based on their influence in the community and on their divergent perspectives, objectives, and opinions. This purposeful selection of

stakeholders promoted the opportunity to explore a rich case and gain a meaningful comprehension of the issues (Bryman, 2012).

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions and notes are confidential, and I retained all material related to the dissertation in a secure location. In addition, I assigned codes for transcriptions. Information in the dissertation is not attributed to any specific person by name or identifying evidence unless the information already appears in the public domain, or the informant agreed explicitly to being identified as the source.

Informants had an agreement signed by me as the researcher and themselves as the informant. The agreement restated that the project was voluntary, and the informant could end at any time without explanation. Informant rights were explained, including the right to review or withdraw material during an interview. The semi-structured questions were predominantly open-ended to attain full information (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Thus, there was an opportunity to understand interview responses deeply and categorize them effectively (Mason, 2010).

Collection of data from multiple sources and proper data analysis supports the construct validity of the study through triangulation of interviews from multiple sources, thereby minimizing the potential for bias. For purposes of controlling for bias on the worksheet, the Highly Salient Stakeholder groups and individuals were listed alphabetically by the group representative's or individual's last name. Interviews generally lasted between 45 and 75 minutes, with follow-up interviews as needed, until I reached a level of redundancy that indicated that no new relevant information was forthcoming, per

Lincoln & Guba (1985). The objective was to employ an emergent sampling design with no definitive, *a priori*, specification of the sample, but rather to select informants following the need to seek and extend certain information and to focus on those informants who seem most relevant and knowledgeable of essential things (Jacob and Furgerson, 2012). The data analysis allowed for determinations regarding stakeholder salience and power, how they exercised their power, and how it evolved.

The first stage of data analysis involved constructing a detailed timeline of events related to the new terminal proposal (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Looking back to 2012 allowed for more accurate identification of potential informants and provided historical context for understanding the process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) set out analysis guidelines. They included utilizing and categorizing information gathering, which was applied to documents about the new terminal public-private partnership procurement to assess the evolution and impact on the flow and progression of the pre-solicitation phase and the outcome. The second stage of data analysis focused on content analysis of the transcripts of interviews from informants. Transcripts were analyzed using NVivo computer software (Melbourne, Australia: QSR International) according to guidelines for theory-based content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Initial coding involved categorizing the informants, identifying references to the process, and noting issues related to content. A second pass through the data recognized coded speech turns based on references to salience attributes and types of power. Interpretation and refinement of units and categories continued throughout the research and writing exercise.

## **Management of Data**

I recorded interviews using the video communications tool called Zoom, which allowed for video and audio recording. After each interview, I produced a written transcript of the recording. I again reviewed the video and audio session to refine the transcript and accurately reflect the video and audio recording, noting the informant's body language and vocal inflections. Journaling was an added technique that helped capture the body language and vocal inflection, thereby enriching the value of the interview (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010).

After determining that no more refinement was indicated, I destroyed each video and audio recordings. I upheld confidentiality by ensuring neither the recording before destruction nor the transcription included the informant's name. I created a code to maintain a link between the identity of the informant and the transcribed interview and completed worksheet. Each informant had a number that was a link to the informant's identity and contact information. This number was maintained separately from the de-identified data.

All worksheet data was input into the survey software called Qualtrics. The data was managed in spreadsheet software called Microsoft Excel. Figures and tables were created from Microsoft Excel for data visualization and analysis to illustrate, among other things, perceived power as rated by highly salient stakeholders and their peers at distinct points within the timeline of the study.

## **Coding and Data Preparation**

Coding and data preparation began concurrently with data collection. I continually refined coding and data throughout the remainder of the study. Procedures followed the guidelines set forth by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Transcripts were also manually coded to reveal themes and trends. The process used was an open coding technique, considered reliable and subjective for the qualitative data coding, categorization, and classification. Interview transcripts were utilized electronically with NVivo computer software, applying a thematic analysis technique. There was no significant difference between the two approaches, which strengthened the ability to identify stakeholder salience and social power.

Unitizing involved identifying small pieces of information that later served as the basis for defining and expanding themes. These small pieces or units of information had two common characteristics; first, they had to be pertinent to understanding the study, not simply exciting information; second, they had to be the smallest piece of information concerning the new terminal proposal that could stand by itself. These units had to be interpretable in the absence of any supplementary information, other than a broad understanding of the context of the study, which Creswell (2013) describes as “broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (p. 186). I reflected this information by a note or sentence in my interview notes or the documents I was reviewing.

Journal notes regarding body language and vocal inflections were occasionally helpful in corroborating previously unitized data. Examples of this corroboration included:

(a) animated expressions and accelerated speech when discussing the mayor's initial announcement of a no-bid, unsolicited proposal; (b) a dismissive glance or eye-roll when referring to a citizen group that several years earlier had extracted the promise of a public vote but more recently had fallen into a role repeatedly described as a "gadfly"; (c) a wince when reviewing unflattering news stories or events that were in the public view.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative research embraces the complexity of interpreting the world through ideologies and identities while helping researchers go beyond their initial conceptions to uncover the meaning already there, waiting to be discovered (Miles et al., 2013). There are a variety of approaches to the process of data analysis in qualitative research. Yin (2018) described dominant modes of qualitative data analysis that included searching for patterns by comparing results with patterns predicted by theories or in the literature. I looked for patterns in causal relationships and time-scenario analyses, where I traced changes in a pattern over time.

Content analysis was used to systematically analyze the data as a replicable and valid method for making specific inferences from text to other states or properties of its source. It then compressed words into fewer content categories using coding guidelines consistent with Weber (1990) and set out in Table 3.2. The result was much more than word counts based on frequency, but rather open coding and content-sensitive scheme coding that provided named categories through the detailed examination of the data. The concepts were then sorted into groupings of related and similar entities, i.e., categories that aligned additional concepts into subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

As I reviewed the material, I developed a codebook to help analyze and interpret the data. Through the archival documents, I combined the thematic analysis described by Grbich (2013) using themes from Freeman (1984) regarding stakeholders, Mitchell et al. (1997) regarding salience attributes, and Wrong (2019) regarding bases of power. I also applied an enumerative content analysis explained in Miles et al. (2013) to simply see how many times a word or sentiment or theme appeared in the data. Next, I identified an initial list of descriptive codes for deductive coding. My initial list drew on a general understanding of infrastructure procurement, agreements and contracts, and elements included in the theoretical framework I chose to apply to this case study to gain a deeper understanding of the different aspects of the theories and how they did, or did not, connect to the codes and subsequent themes that are identified in the documents (Maxwell, 2013). This line-by-line coding proved to be tedious but also fruitful. From interpretative codes, I establish broader themes. After multiple re-reads, I identified the main themes that arose, along with the interpretative codes. Finally, I integrated those main themes into key elements of the theoretical framework I applied, including agency theory, resource dependence theory, and stakeholder theory.

Presented in Table 3.2. is the enumerative and thematic coding used in this study.

Table 3.2. Enumerative and Thematic Coding Guide

THEME	INTERPRETIVE CODES (DEFINITIONS)	DESCRIPTIVE CODES	DEFINITION OF DESCRIPTIVE CODES
Informant	Those persons or groups who are named in the archival literature, interviews,	INF	non-stakeholder who provides relevant information
Observer		OBS	non-stakeholder who expresses observational opinion

(table continues)

THEME	INTERPRETIVE CODES (DEFINITIONS)	DESCRIPTIVE CODES	DEFINITION OF DESCRIPTIVE CODES
Stakeholder	and worksheets	ST	“Any group or individual who affects or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives” (Freeman, 1984, p. 46).
Saliency	Who and what really counts, and how much (to whom?)	SA	"[T]he degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims" (Mitchell et al. 1997, p. 854).
1. Legitimacy		LMCY	"[A] generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" (Suchman, 1995, p.574)
2. Urgency		URG	"[T]he degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention" time-sensitive AND critical (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 867).
3. Power	Relational between two individuals in which participant A was able to influence participant B into an action that, absent A’s influence, B would not have done (Dahl, 1957)	PWR	"[T]he extent to which a party has or can gain access to coercive (physical means), utilitarian (material means), or normative (prestige, esteem, and social) means to impose their will" (Etzioni, 1998, p. 59)
3.1 Coercive	Power to obtain compliance by the threat of force	COE	“[F]or A to obtain B's compliance by threatening him with force, B must be convinced of both A's capability and willingness to use force against him. A may have succeeded in convincing B of both by advertising and displaying the means and instruments of force that [it] controls” (Wrong, 2017, p. 41).

(table continues)

THEME	INTERPRETIVE CODES (DEFINITIONS)	DESCRIPTIVE CODES	DEFINITION OF DESCRIPTIVE CODES
3.2 Competent	Power derived from use of knowledge or skill	COM	Power where specialists or experts in particular fields possess the requisite knowledge to solve complex problems or accommodate stakeholder needs in collaboration (Hankinson, 2009).
3.3 Induced	Power gained by using economic reward	IND	"Relationships in which one party submits 'voluntarily' to the [power holder's] commands in return for economic rewards well above sheer subsistence needs" (Wrong, 2017, p. 45).
3.4 Legitimate	Power one has as a result of the position or a right to command	LEG	"[T]he power holder possesses an acknowledged right to command and the power subject an acknowledged obligation to obey" (Wrong, 2017, p. 49).

Rather than using a predetermined framework of possible responses, actual text provided by the informants through interview transcripts revealed the relevant categories. Through reading and re-reading responses, an iterative interpretation drew out meaningful categories and subcategories and a refined meaning of the categories. Each response was coded into as many categories and subcategories as necessary to capture the scope of an informant's emotions and opinions. Responses deemed incomprehensible or inconclusive were not coded to minimize potential coding errors (e.g., the word "just" was coded for concepts of justice and had to be refined to correct for colloquial uses such as, "she just threw up [their] hands"). Attention was paid to ensure the utility of content analysis with accurate definitions of categories and mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories (Shapiro & Markoff, 1997). Well-documented data allowed for data analysis that was "a continuous, iterative enterprise" (Miles et al., 2013, p. 14).

To ensure trustworthiness, I employed the following: (a) completed an extensive literature review and created an analytical template for themes that emerged from that review; (b) conducted a thorough investigation of archival documents and using an in-depth interview protocol; and (c) triangulated the archival documents, interviews and literature review data utilizing a pertinent document review and visual observations to calibrate the context of the data.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Ultimately, the research must be plausible, credible, trustworthy, and defensible. Johnson (1997) articulated three types of validity: descriptive validity, interpretive validity, and theoretical validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested, "[s]ince there can be no validity without reliability (and thus no credibility without dependability), a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter" (p. 316).

Descriptive validity referred to the factual accuracy of the research as reported by me, the qualitative researcher. Interpretive validity represented the accuracy of my understanding of participants' perceptions and experiences (Creswell, 2014). Synonyms were sometimes used for stylistic reasons throughout the research to adapt for one word with more than one meaning; however, great care was taken not to underestimate the importance of a concept (Weber, 1990). I utilized follow-up questions as appropriate with an objective to ensure interpretive validity by avoiding miscommunications and misunderstandings. Theoretical validity helped ensure the research study fit the data and was credible and defensible when considered against the theories involved. As the research unfolded, I sought crystallization (Ellingson, 2009). Finally, I compared pieces of

information against each other to enhance validity, examples of which were to collect information from different sources of archival documents and people at different times from different places and perspectives. These multiple sources, interviews, worksheets, and observation and documentation helped control for subjectivity and bias inherent in case study research.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Considering ethical considerations, The Belmont Report (Sales and Folkman, 2000) illuminated three basic ethical principles when engaging in research involving human subjects. These three principles I adhered to were beneficence, justice, and respect for persons. In addition, consistent with Creswell (2013), it was my responsibility as the researcher to anticipate potential ethical issues. Informants in my research were all adults who were presented with a letter of introduction, informed consent, and the opportunity to participate voluntarily. Additionally, to safeguard that my research proposal complied with the standards and expectations set by the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the National Research Act, I followed the guidelines and procedures of the IRB. The IRB ensured that ethical issues were addressed to protect any human subjects who volunteered and participated in my research. This included an awareness of power and privilege and how it affected my collection and assessment of the research.

Material from this research project will be saved for seven years after completion of the research. This includes letters of consent, notes, communications, and other personal or personally identifiable information that will be stored on my password-protected computer or a university computer network to ensure the security of physical and data

materials. In addition, a code number identified informants to ensure privacy, anonymity, and trust. After fully informing participants of the research and the audience, I obtained a consent form. Consent was voluntary, as was participation, and individuals were advised that they could withdraw at any time.

### **Summary**

This chapter articulated the research methodology applied to answer the research questions. The chapter covers research design, researcher's role and perspective, setting, and informant selection are described. Data collection aligns with the research questions by utilizing archival documents, interviews, and worksheets. Details regarding the management of data, coding and data preparation, and data analysis were explained. This methodology is designed to achieve the purpose of this study, which is to help understand stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. Through thorough coding of archival documents and interviews and the use of informant worksheets, the methodology sets the stage for in-depth data collection and analysis, providing a rich and thick description of the new terminal proposal and the stakeholder dynamics during the pre-solicitation phase of that project. Chapter Four explains in detail the findings of this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

This chapter organizes and reports on the case study's main findings, arranged to align with the first three of five research questions. A summary of those questions is: who are salient stakeholders, how are they salient, what are the forms and frequency of social power exercised by the salient stakeholders, and what is the nature, degree, and evolution of their social power?

Findings from archival documents inform the question of who are the salient stakeholders, and these findings contributed to the creation of a list of informants and stakeholders. A deeper inquiry revealed salience attributes and classifications among stakeholders and the mystery of actors and events occurring behind the scenes. From these findings, the Highly Salient Stakeholder group was developed that included the individuals and organizations labeled as the newspaper, mayor, city manager, committee chair, initial offeror, organized labor, hired legal expert, councilmember A, end-user/tenant, councilmembers B and C, and the successful bidder.

The findings of this study address a need for academics and practitioners to understand better stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. Tables and figures report salience attributes and classification across a timeline of the pre-solicitation phase, from Spring 2017 to July 18, 2017, and provide the data to answer the research questions. The first question to be answered is who are the salient stakeholders?

## **Salient Stakeholders**

### **Informant and Stakeholder Lists**

From archival documents, I identified a list of 18 informants, of whom 13 agreed to participate. One of those who did not participate did not respond at all, and the others declined courteously. Then, through snowball sampling, I added six informants who met the criteria of having direct knowledge and involvement in the proposal or process. Three of these agreed to participate. The other three never responded to my requests. In all, the 16 interviews covered a range of individuals intimately involved in the events over the spring and summer of 2017, including individuals in decision-making roles and those who influenced the proposal and process but did not have authority, as described by Cohen and Bradford (2005).

In most cases, the interview sessions were nearly hour-long monologues with minor prompts from me to focus on the research's specific areas, such as stakeholder dynamics and power. The lengthy interview allowed the informant to provide a complete and accurate picture of the events, relevant individuals and organizations, and power, all critical to helping ensure validity in the research. Of note, a search of public records and reports revealed that after the award of the contract to build the new terminal, there were no protests filed, and there have been no lawsuits registered in public records arising out of the facts of the contract award.

### **Salience**

Mitchell et al. (1997) wrote about how stakeholders interacted, what interactions were relevant, and why. They attempted to identify stakeholders and measure their salience,

i.e., a stakeholder’s primacy in a relationship. They explained that “the question of stakeholder salience ... goes beyond the question of stakeholder identification because the dynamics inherent in each relationship involve complex considerations that are not readily explained by the stakeholder framework as it currently stands” (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 854). The typology applied to stakeholders by the authors was the presence of one or more of three relationship attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997). The presence of attributes in stakeholders in this case were identified by coding the data and contributed to the classification of stakeholders within a framework that indicated their salience to managers of the firm. When I conducted the comprehensive review and coding of the interview transcripts, I found that many of the informants mentioned terms and sentiments coded for salience attributes. Coded terms and sentiments were listed in Table 3.2. Definitions, as well as the frequency of the terms and sentiments, are in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Stakeholder Salience Descriptive Codes, Definitions, and Frequency

<b>DESCRIPTIVE CODES</b>	<b>DEFINITION OF DESCRIPTIVE CODES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY OF CODED TERMS</b>
Salience	"the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims" (Mitchell et al. 1997, p. 854)	220 instances from all 11 informants
Legitimacy Attributes	"a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions" (Suchman, 1995, p.574)	73 instances from 9 informants
Urgency Attributes	"the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention" is time-sensitive AND critical (Mitchell et al., 1997, p. 867)	69 instances from 7 informants
Power Attributes	"the extent to which a party has or can gain access to coercive (physical means), utilitarian (material means), or normative (prestige, esteem, and social) means to impose their will" (Etzioni, 1998, p. 59)	78 instances from all 11 informants

The results show that there were 220 instances when the informants mentioned the attribute terms, or phrases for salience attributes. The legitimacy attribute had 73 mentions by nine informants. The urgency attribute had 69 mentions by seven informants. The power attribute had 78 mentions, with at least one mention by each of the informants. Findings of frequency of salience attributes reveal that all informants discussed some salience attributes. Examples of comments that reflected salience attributes include one insider who described power as related to the mayor this way, “[i]n the beginning the mayor had all the power. The council wasn’t supposed to question anything.” Another sentiment clearly illustrated urgency: “The process was very rushed as you recall because the committee wanted to have an MOU (memorandum of understanding) by the end of August so they could go to a vote in November.” Legitimacy, the perception or assumption that a stakeholder’s actions were appropriate or desirable (Suchman, 1995), was reflected in a story shared by an astute city hall observer about a councilmember who “was the sort of a leader on the council who would really have the ability to move people.”

Worksheets provided to the informants had two blank lines below the 10 named “Key Stakeholders.” The objective was to encourage informants to add additional individuals or groups they considered to be important stakeholders. I received only two names on the worksheets from two different individuals who each submitted one name. One additional name was a labor union that received little attention in the archival documents but historically was a strong force in the city's labor and political community. The data indicated that organized labor was not speaking with one voice, as illustrated in the comment from a longtime political observer, “I don’t know if [organized labor] were

always on the same page.” This labor union, whose name was added, was significant in its own right, separate from the umbrella group I refer to as organized labor. However, because not all informants rated the additional name for power, their data is not included in the comprehensive information presented below. The second entity was a leader of a prominent organization within the Kansas City African American community. They had a presence, but their power was exercised after the timeline of my case study when negotiations took place to establish minority participation goals for the project. Therefore, I did not include them as a Highly Salient Stakeholder for purposes of my study.

During the interviews, an occasional new name surfaced as a possible addition. Some names included Royal’s baseball luminary George Brett, a public spokesperson for the initial proposer. Also, Congressman Sam Graves, who opposed a new terminal early on but subsequently supported the final arrangement. Finally, the National Society of Black Engineers was mentioned in an interview. They are a respected organization that had influence, but they emerged later in the process, beyond my research timeline. I did not include any of these on my stakeholder list because they did not meet the threshold for knowledge and involvement in the proposal or process during the timeline of my case.

Every one of the 13-member city council had a legislative and policy role and had a stake. Of all the councilmembers, the names that were mentioned with some frequency were Teresa Loar, Jermain Reed, and Kathryn Shields. Loar, hereafter councilmember B, was in her third term on the city council. She had previously been the chair of the Aviation Committee when the three terminals went through significant renovations. She was very familiar with the airport from her previous leadership roles, and she used that knowledge to

be an outspoken voice in the debates of Summer 2017. Many informants suggested that she had an affinity for the three horseshoe-shaped terminals. As an astute citizen said in an interview, “we love our horseshoes.”

Jermain Reed was on the six-member selection panel. He was studious, although he did not frequently comment in the media. As one of only two members of the council on the actual selection panel, he had an important vote, but he was overshadowed by the committee chair, who frequently appeared with the mayor and in the media. Councilmember Reed became more vocal later in the process, beyond the timeline of this study. In late August 2017, he submitted to the newspaper an interpretation on significant numbers in the process from the spring and summer. These numbers included that the city’s RFP was 46 pages and that the four proposals totaled 1,411 pages. Despite Councilmember Reed’s voting role and the earnestness with which he participated, he was not at the River Club where the initial proposal was first laid out to city leaders.

Councilmember Kathryn Shields was in her first term, but she was previously elected as the Jackson County Executive, a job with a larger constituency than the city council. She also had a reputation for her contacts, a solid political base, and being very vocal. Over the timeline of this study, Councilmember Shields, hereafter referred to as councilmember C, was quoted extensively in the news and displayed their power by raising relevant questions more than advocating for a particular position.

The entities Southwest Airlines (Southwest) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) were mentioned. For several years leading up to 2017, Southwest’s name did appear in archival documents as the largest airline operating at the airport.

Southwest, hereafter referred to as the end-user/tenant, was and would continue to be the dominant airline at the airport, and their vote gave them veto power over any proposal.

The FAA, conversely, received little attention in the archival documents. As the mayor pointed out in their book, “[a]irports in the U.S. are federal government entities. They're governed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), not the city, county, or state.” (James, 2019, p. 64). This governance role gave the FAA, hereafter referred to as the regulator, a stake, but they stayed behind the scenes. They were not alone behind the scenes.

### Stakeholders Behind the Scenes

The term “behind the scenes” was mentioned 39 times by seven different informants about five entities. There was plenty of activity going on behind the scenes and there were stakeholders acting behind the scenes. Observations from insiders included comments such as: “they obviously had tremendous influence behind the scenes,” and “they were very careful with where they stuck their neck out politically, and they stayed pretty well behind the scenes,” and “there were a lot of maneuverings and machinations going on behind the scenes. . .” I did inquire and report on matters that occurred behind the scenes. In a broader study, it would be naïve and limiting to ignore the salience of additional stakeholders who may have included political advisors whispering in ears, construction industry figures trying to get into the project or keep others out, and other unnamed or unidentified forces “behind the scenes.” Managers and highly salient stakeholders in a project are well served by exploring and understanding those behind-the-scenes activities and actors. An area for further study is additional investigation into the

behind the scenes. As someone who hoped to profit from the project pointed out clearly, “[y]ou know, there’s \$1 billion on the line here. I’m sure there’s lots of moving parts and only some of it is visible.”

### Highly Salient Stakeholders

I used the term Key Stakeholder when working with informants to aid the informants in understanding what kind of information I was seeking during data collection. For purposes of the study, I revised the term Key Stakeholder used on the worksheets to the term Highly Salient Stakeholder to reflect salience attributes. In light of the relevant literature and theory, the terms salient and stakeholder are more applicable and more clearly illustrate the findings. The highly salient stakeholders were those identified in the research as the most salient and in the top tier for having the most power, i.e., those who really count, as Freeman (1984) described. Table 4.2. shows a list of initially identified highly salient stakeholders, as measured by the frequency and intensity of their involvement in the proposal and the subsequent process that constitute this case. I was also able to measure perceived power for those stakeholders by asking informants to rate power using the worksheets that were part of the study (see Appendix C).

To focus on the broader roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders as opposed to the individuals and personalities, the stakeholders are hereafter no longer referred to by their names but instead by a position description representing the role they occupied in the case shown in Table 4.2. Additionally, consistent with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Seventh Edition, I utilize the singular “they”

when gender is irrelevant to the context and to avoid unnecessary assumptions about gender.

Table 4.2. Initially Identified Highly Salient Stakeholder List

Highly Salient Stakeholder (in order of appearance)	Position Description
KC Star	Newspaper
KC Mayor	Mayor
KC City Manager	City Manager
KC Councilmember and Aviation Committee Chair	Committee Chair
Burns & McDonnell	Initial Proposer
Greater KC AFL-CIO	Organized Labor
Citizens for Responsive Government	Citizens Group
KC Councilmember	Councilmember A
Private Attorney / Outside Counsel to KCMO	Hired Legal Expert
Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate	Successful Bidder

For purposes of salience and based on the findings from the interview research, I added to the initial stakeholder list the following: councilmember B, councilmember C, the end-user/tenant, and the regulator, as shown in Table 4.3 and identified by their position descriptions.

Table 4.3 Additionally Identified Highly Salient Stakeholder List

Additional Highly Salient Stakeholder	Position Description
Southwest Airlines	End-user/tenant
Councilmember and Former Committee Chair	Councilmember B
Councilmember and Former County Executive	Councilmember C
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Regulator

### *Newspaper*

Before the May 12 announcement of an unsolicited proposal to construct a new terminal, there were years of discussion and debate surrounding the airport. The newspaper reported on many of the debates and was instrumental in informing the public and many of the other stakeholders about what was happening in the fast-moving, fast-changing airport debate. However, circulation in the newspaper had declined to roughly 90,000 for print and digital readers from over 250,000 15 years earlier. One informant who enjoyed a career in the newsgathering and reporting business around the country observed: “I know, the paper doesn’t have the influence that it once did, but I believe that when it comes to intensely local matters, local elections, local issues like this, the paper still does matter.” The newspaper expressed strong opinions through the editorial page, and many informants had strong opinions about the newspaper, for example, “[the newspaper] grabbed the sensational headline without doing a whole lot of work and without looking at the real issues, and then just went to print with it.” As we will see in more detail later, the newspaper was salient and had a stake throughout the timeline of this study.

### *Mayor*

In 2017, the mayor was in their second and last term. The mayor stood front and center at the press conference on May 12, announcing the initial unsolicited proposal. It was a proposal, not an agreement, although the distinction was blurred in those early days and weeks. Many people were left with the impression that the mayor had the unilateral authority to enter into an agreement without the city council. This was not true, but it may

have been an impression the mayor was willing to foster. The city operates under a “weak-mayor” form of government, described this way by a knowledgeable informant:

Missouri is a great example... So, St. Louis is a stronger mayor and Kansas City is a weak mayor, strong city manager. This post-reform governance structure is beneficial in many ways, but it doesn't lend itself to any one elected official. You really need the mayor and six other councilmembers to get anything approved in the city. You also need to hold the city manager in a certain spot to move things forward so really you have at the top of the food chain, 14 public officials, and some form of a majority of those public officials need to be in place to take action.

The mayor found themselves in this political reality. They described events of that period, and their perceived role, in the book they wrote after leaving office. “All that was left was to discuss this with the city council to see if they liked the idea, and then if so, it seemed as though everything could move forward. Our desperately needed replacement for the antiquated [airport] finally seemed to be moving from wishful thinking to reality” (James, 2019, p. 76). Despite having only one vote on the council, the mayor was an essential stakeholder from start to finish. Their chief of staff, through many of those years in the mayor's office, said in a 2019 interview, “It's just not in [their] nature to sit in [their] office knowing a problem exists and not fix it” (Shelly, 2019, A1). They did not sit still, and despite detractors and complaining, their strong influence was almost universally acknowledged. One of their strongest detractors on the council said in a newspaper interview about the time of the mayor's departure from city hall, “[The mayor] is the cool [one] with the bow tie. I think [they] created a great image for Kansas City” (Shelly, 2019,

A1). Another powerful informant pinned the entire airport on them: “if [the mayor] isn’t the mayor, Kansas City doesn’t have a new airport, I don’t think.”

*City Manager*

By 2017, the city manager had been in the job almost eight years and worked in city hall for almost 15 years. An informant described them this way: “[The city manager] was sort of managing the nuts and bolts of the process for the city. So [they] was obviously another big player.” [The city manager] effectively oversaw all the civil service bureaucracy, including the city-led airport administration. The city’s governance structure of a weak-mayor, strong manager lent itself to the city manager’s influence. A long-serving official said the “city manager has institutional knowledge on how big projects get done. [They’s] got a level of professionalism and respect and independence that in theory is separate and apart from sort of political influences that you know, was quite useful if people were really in the business of trying to get a project.” The view supported Suchman’s (1995) explanation of legitimacy as a perception or assumption that a stakeholder’s actions were appropriate or desirable within the beliefs, norms, and values of the social system in which they are operating.

From the outset, the city manager’s sentiment was clear. they expressed in the newspaper on May 12, “[t]his is a heck of a lift,’ [the city manager] said, saying the proposal from [initial proposer] is the first of its kind to come forward in the 10 years that [they] has been researching and courting airport construction options” (Robertson, 2017, p. A1). The city manager had power and legitimacy. Regarding this case, from the day of the announcement on May 12, they also had urgency.

### *Committee Chair*

The committee chair was a long-serving and successful elected official. They previously served two terms in the state senate and rose to be their party's leader. Voters elected them to the city council in 2015. As chair of the aviation committee, they was a *de facto* member of the selection committee. In addition, many viewed them as a serious contender to be the next mayor. The incumbent mayor was in their second term, and the position of mayor had a two-term limit. The incumbent mayor seemed to be grooming the committee chair to be their successor. As a city hall watcher said, "the mayor put [they] in charge of this airport thing, and to some extent, it's a way for them, you know, to notch a big win and be able to talk about that when [they] would run for office." Another said, "[they] was like the mayor's agent." I have described them as initially being a part of the mayor's band of collaborators.

### *Initial Proposer*

The initial proposer was one of the city's premier engineering firms, established in 1898 and, according to their website, employing over 7,500 people. With no inherent authority, the initial proposer was leveraging what Cohen and Bradford (2005) referred to as currencies to gain influence in the absence of authority. They utilized "currencies frequently valued by organizations" (p. 70) by stepping forward with an unsolicited proposal. In this case, these included inspiration-related currencies such as their vision, task-related currencies like resources and organizational support, and position-related currencies that consist of their reputation and relationships. The informants said it all: "[Initial proposer] has a sterling reputation," "[they are] an iconic Kansas City company,"

and the “[initial proposer] just had better relationships in the community.” However, the ultimate statement was, “[t]hey were the front runners going in. Yeah, they were the front runners and they lost it. I mean, come on, they didn’t get the contract.”

### *Organized Labor*

For this study, I consolidated separate trade unions into a single category called organized labor. Through the interviews and additional research, it became evident that there were differences of approach and opinion within different trade unions that make up organized labor. An astute observer said, “I don’t know if [the trade unions] were always on the same page.” One member of the organized labor community distinguished their labor union power, saying, “[w]e certainly have more political clout,” and “we certainly have more political funding.” However, the distinction was not explored more deeply in this study. Organized labor as a whole had a vested interest in the new terminal project going forward because it would employ more members from a variety of labor unions. It was summed up nicely this way, “Oh hell yeah, they were out there. They were very aggressive in trying to protect their position.” That position, fundamentally, was the creation of union jobs. Therefore, while they supported the initial proposal, their approach was pragmatic. As the leader of an umbrella organized labor organization said to the press, “[t]he time has now come for a new airport (terminal)” (Robertson, 2017, A1.)

### *Citizens Group*

The group of citizens focused on the airport got an occasional mention in the archival documents. In the mayor’s 2019 book, they referred to the group as CAVE people, Citizens Against Virtually Everything (James, p. 77). The pinnacle of influence from the

citizens group was in 2014 when they secured a promise for a citywide vote on any significant airport initiatives. The achievement was prior to the timeline of this study, but there was a perception of what was described as lingering influence remaining with the citizens group. Their limited influence gave some, perhaps even the citizens group itself, the impression of the significant power. However, there was no indication from the research that others perceived the citizen group with legitimacy or urgency, as we will discuss later in this chapter. They infrequently appeared at public events in small numbers and to speak if allowed, but as one informant put it, “[they] thinks they’ve got a bigger coalition and a bigger bunch of supporters than [they] do.” Another astutely pointed out, “It was difficult for the media to find people who were opposed to the new terminal, so the [citizens group] got a lot more airtime than they probably ever should have. If you really kind of dig down into it, [they] didn’t have a lot of support.” Nonetheless, the citizens group inalterably influenced the initial unsolicited proposal and the process because of the public vote requirement.

As identified earlier, a decrease in financial resources for governments at the local, state, and federal levels results in greater interest for alternative financing (Rall et al., 2010). As opposed to public financing, private financing was a significant factor in the appeal of the initial proposal. The belief frequently expressed by the mayor and other stakeholders, and a notion supported by internal polling and referenced frequently by the mayor was that the voting public was skeptical of a new terminal, thinking they would have to pay the bill from city general revenue. As one opinion leader put it, the voters thought a new terminal at the airport “would jeopardize potholes being filled or new

firehouses or garbage collection within the city limits.” However, funding for commercial airport construction and operations in the U.S. comes from user fees, therefore, municipalities neither fund airports nor receive funds from the airport. Convincing municipal voters of the economics of airport finance was another matter. The mayor in their book said, “[t]he financing of the new [airport] would never have used tax dollars . . .” but “[the initial proposal] plan could potentially end that confusion” (James, 2019, p. 76).

*Councilmember A*

Councilmember A had a remarkable beating-the-odds personal story that they told well, capped with an Ivy League education, a law professorship, and election to the city council. In 2017, they was viewed as a rising star by fans and foes alike. As the timeline of this study played out, they became outspoken, was quoted frequently in the local press, and seemed to voluntarily or involuntarily be portrayed as an offsetting voice to the mayor and the band of four collaborators. A city hall watcher noted that “[they] saw this an opportunity where [they] could make a name for [themselves] as someone who was in opposition.” In particular, councilmember A was a counterbalance to the committee chair. An informant described it this way: “The mayor’s race began to sort of form around this airport issue.” Political prognosticators were correct in forecasting the upcoming 2019 race for mayor because the committee chair and councilmember A were the top two vote-getters in the primary election. They faced off against each other in the general election for mayor, which councilmember A won. As of this writing, they is the mayor.

### *Hired Legal Expert*

The hired legal expert was a local attorney who had an expanding local and national legal practice focused on public-private partnerships. One real estate developer described them: “[they] [b]uilt a name around the country as someone who had done [public-private partnerships].” Prior to May 12, pertaining to this case, the hired legal expert was a non-stakeholder in terms of the Mitchell et al. (1997) salience framework. At the time of the prelude and the announcement, they had no attributes for purposes of this study. However, once the city hired them, ironically through a no-bid contract, and sought their counsel, “[they] kind of inserted [themselves] into the process,” said one informant. The observation that the hired legal expert inserted themselves into the process belies the contractual reality that the hired legal expert was invited into the process and they were expected to provide counsel. This observation may reflect displeasure with the counsel the outside legal expert provided. Nonetheless, the hired legal expert attained salience attributes that put them onto the highly salient stakeholder list from that point forward. They also benefited from, as one informant said with an air of resentment, “a hell of a lot of (free) marketing for [their] work.”

### *Successful Bidder*

The successful bidder was a national property developer but was not well known in the local community nor had they built many large-scale projects in the area. Even in 2021, halfway through the \$1.5 billion airport construction budget, neither the corporate website nor their construction company affiliate showed a local office nor a local project other than the new terminal. The successful bidder as the project developer established a joint venture

with a local construction company. A large sign at the project site does not have the successful bidder's name but instead lists three joint venture partners, including the name of a local construction company. Nonetheless, a local business newspaper summed up their approach to the RFP: “[Successful bidder] flies under radar to \$1B [airport] project recommendation” (Roberts, 2017, A3).

#### *End-user/tenant*

The airlines that operated at the airport had power because pursuant to the federal law that governs commercial airports in the U.S., any airport proposal required agreement by those airlines. The airlines voted on operational issues based on the size of their presence at the airport. This weighted voting reflected the number of flights and passengers and the corresponding amount of landing fees collected, which were the primary funding source for a new terminal. A city leader said, “[They] paid for the new terminal with the fees that they get from flyers and so ostensibly if they didn't like a plan they could say ‘no, we're not going to spend our money that way.’ So, they had the power of the purse.” Another decision-maker in the process added, “[they] flew below the radar screen throughout the process, but they were instrumental.”

#### *Councilmembers B and C*

Each city councilmember has a vote on the council. Procedurally, in an average procurement, the council votes to approve or disapprove of the recommendation made by a selection committee charged with looking deeply into the procurement and proposals. But the airport new terminal procurement was not average. Additionally, as a sage of city hall put it succinctly, “[i]n a weak-mayor form of government, these things are collective

actions by a political body, which includes the mayor and the city council. So, we knew the councilmembers would have an active interest in this.” For purposes of this case, research indicated that the highly salient stakeholders on the council were councilmembers B and C. In 2017, eight city councilmembers of the 13 were in their first term, elected in June 2015. Three of the stakeholders, in this case, were in their first term, the committee chair and councilmembers A and C. In Summer 2017, city hall watchers were wondering aloud about who would run for mayor in 2019 when the incumbent mayor’s second term ended. Many names were mentioned as potential candidates for mayor, including numerous stakeholders from this case. The committee chair and councilmembers A and C were all frequently mentioned as likely candidates in the race for mayor. Councilmember B was not running for mayor, but they was an outspoken member of the council, and they was a previous chair of the airport committee. These dynamics affected stakeholder salience and power throughout the process.

### **In What Ways Are Stakeholders Salient?**

The Mitchell et al. (1997) eight classes of stakeholders based on the absence and presence of stakeholder salience are Dormant, Discretionary, Demanding, Dominant, Dangerous, Dependent, Definitive, and Non-Stakeholders who have no attributes. Using a Venn diagram to explain the three attributes in a framework, they described competing demands of various stakeholders who possessed stakeholder attributes in different combinations. I have adopted that framework and plotted the highly salient stakeholders in this case into the Venn diagram based on their salience attributes at various points in the timeline of this study.

## Spring 2017 – The Prelude

The newspaper, organized labor, councilmembers A, B, and C, and the regulator all had the salience attribute of power, inherently related to this issue. The newspaper had an audience. The councilmembers had a vote. Prior to the May announcement, all were unaware of the mayor's discussions; therefore, they had not established legitimacy related to the proposal because they lacked awareness and a voice in the conversation. They also had no reason to possess urgency on the new terminal proposal. This left all these stakeholders in the Dormant classification, as seen in Figure 4.1. Also in the Dormant classification was the citizens group, who possessed perceived lingering power, by virtue of their 2014 success to get any airport issue on the ballot for a public vote.

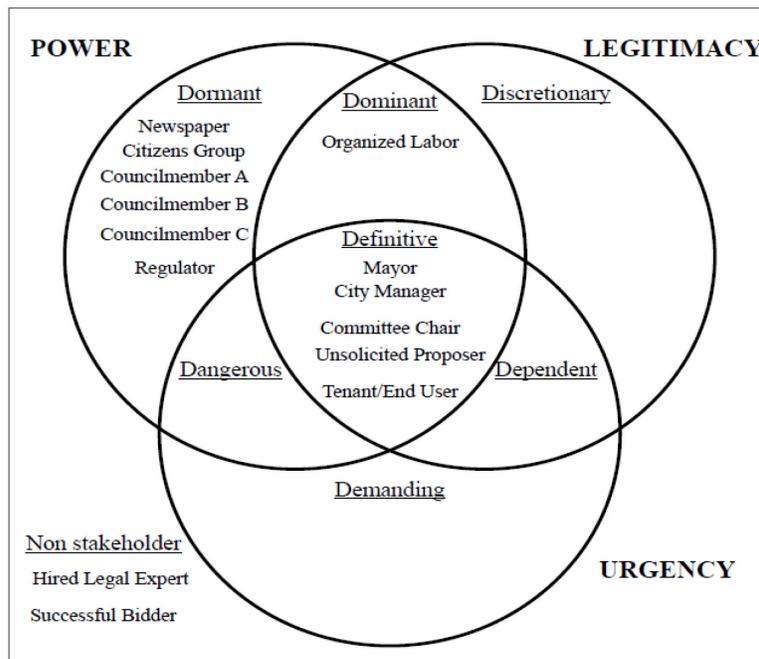


Figure 4.1. Stakeholder Salience Classifications, Spring 2017 – The Prelude

Organized labor was alone in the Dominant class. They had power primarily due to their financial resources, influence over political leaders and the public, and legitimacy because of their standing in the community, especially regarding construction projects like the subject of this case. Yet, prior to the announcement, they too were lacking urgency in Spring 2017.

The band of four collaborators found themselves directly in the Definitive stakeholder class: mayor, city manager, committee chair, and initial proposer. As reported in the newspaper: “In late March, four Kansas City Hall leaders met with [initial proposer] at the River Club, a historic members-only restaurant on Quality Hill overlooking the city’s old airport” (Vockrodt, 2017c, A5). The end-user/tenant was also a Definitive stakeholder, with attributes of power because of their ability to veto any project, legitimacy because they were well established in the community and nationally, and urgency because they had previously complained about the deteriorating state of the existing facilities and threatened to reduce operations. However, the end-user/tenant was not at the River Club and was not in that original band. As a result, Figure 4.1. shows five stakeholders as Definitive, but the most prominent group remained Dormant.

There was stakeholder activity in Spring 2017, some in the foreground but most behind the scenes. One self-described insider talked about the feeling of being on the outside: “I wondered what was being talked about behind the scenes. You know, \$1 billion on the line here. I’m sure a lot of moving parts and only some of that is visible.” Then, on May 12, the moving parts became more visible, and they started moving faster with shifts in salience and displays of power.

## May 12 – The Announcement

On the day of the announcement of an airport new terminal proposal the Highly Salient Stakeholder Attributes framework in Figure 4.2. looked similar to the framework from Spring 2017 in Figure 4.1., except that the newspaper immediately attained legitimacy and urgency by immediately raising questions and calling for a new process. Organized labor also attained urgency and joined the mayor and the band in front of the cameras for the public announcement. The newspaper broke the story of the proposal by running a front-page story on May 11, and the line, “[airport] plan for a new terminal needs more public input – and less secrecy” (Robertson, 2017, p. A1). One informant noted: “The paper had influence because...public support for [the new terminal] was key.” Another said, “[these events made the paper] the most relevant that they had been in a very long time.” As measured by column inches alone, the newspaper demonstrated its relevance by producing 20 editorials and news stories on the new terminal before the end of May. The number of stories on events surrounding the new terminal was noted by an informant who said, “. . . writing as many stories as the newspaper did about the process, which is not inherently sexy stuff about how the airport should be built” reflected the newspaper’s level of engagement. Figure 4.2. shows that on May 12, the newspaper moved into a new class, from Dormant to Definitive on the salience framework.

Councilmembers A, B, and C also found themselves on the outside looking in on the announcement of one of the most significant public works projects in the city’s history. On the day of the announcement, May 12, they were immediately legitimate when it came to the case because they had a vote and a voice to use as the massive project made its way

to full approval. Nevertheless, while they might have felt a sense of eagerness or anxiousness, they did not possess urgency yet, because they did not appear to have decided in which direction they would go, urgently or otherwise.

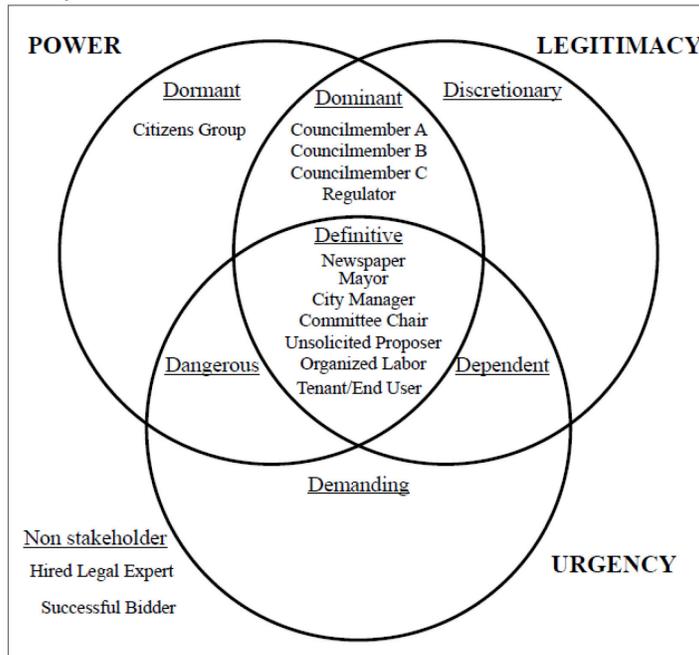


Figure 4.2. Shifting Saliency, May 12 – The Announcement

The hired legal expert and the successful bidder may have seen the news coverage, which was widespread. They both may have wondered if there were a role they could play in a public-private partnership and \$1 billion construction project. But by all accounts, on May 12 they were on the outside and did not have a stake. They remained Non-stakeholders for purposes of this study. Things did not stay this way for long.

#### May 30 – Limited Competition

After May 12, the councilmembers had an urgency to influence the process and perhaps the result. But, by all accounts, they did, as a colleague explained it, “[f]rom that

point on it basically became a fight.” In the coming days and weeks, in an attempt to displace the band of four collaborators, the three counterbalancing councilmembers, A, B, and C, emerged as forces who were exercising their power.

Regarding councilmember A, a community leader said it this way, they was “just being an intellectual powerhouse, you know, and pushing up against [the mayor]. So there was kind of a rivalry there, the [mayor] sensing that [councilmember A] was an up and comer and you know, all of that.” Another, less sympathetic but equally pointed description on councilmember A’s use of power, explained it as a “classic case of political opportunism, [they] saw an opportunity where [they] could make a name for [themselves] as someone who was in opposition.” By May 30, this approach shifted their salience classification from Dominant to Definitive, as seen in Figure 4.3.

On May 18, the city hired a legal expert, and they started providing legal advice. As a result, they moved from a Non-stakeholder to a Dominant stakeholder, with attributes of power through their position counseling the council and legitimacy because the council was listening to them. The successful bidder made the same move because now they were presented with a genuine opportunity to participate, despite the unconventional procurement process. The successful bidder must have appreciated the shift in a way that an insider expressed, “the Swiss challenge was the first crack in the plan because of the notion that, okay, we understand that other people may want to step forward.”

On May 30, the city manager announced that competing proposals would be accepted but that the initial proposer would have the right of first refusal, a so-called Swiss challenge. The newspaper explained that a Swiss challenge would “open the process to

competing offers but allow the company making the original bid to match the winning bid” (Vockrodt, 2017a, p. A3). Thus, by May 30, the band was trying hard to hold on to their place in the Definitive class of salient stakeholders. Figure 4.3. shows where all stakeholders were situated on the salience framework on May 30th. The mayor and city manager remained in lockstep, as described by a city hall observer, “[m]y sense was that [the mayor] and [the city manager] were working together on this of one mind to get this thing to [the initial proposer] and then, you know, get the council approval and knock this one off their plate.” But as more stakeholders were exerting more power, remaining in lockstep proved untenable.

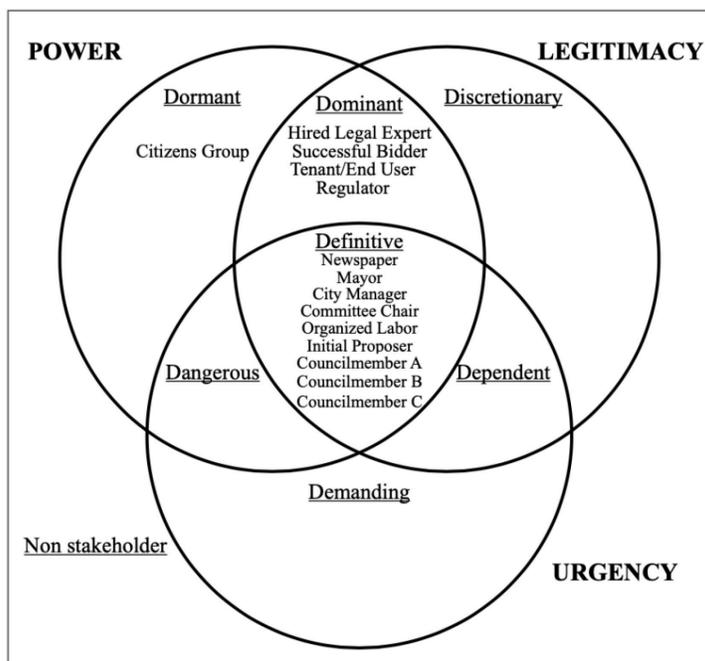


Figure 4.3. Shift Toward Definitive, May 30 – Limited Competition

## June 6 – Full and Open Competition

On June 6, a week after the mayor declared, “[t]he process begins today” (Vockrodt, 2017a, p. A3), the city announced a full and open competition, meaning bids would be considered equally. This change in the process moved the successful bidder from the Dominant class into the Definitive class because they gained the added attribute of urgency as they rushed to prepare and submit a viable proposal. A long-time construction industry leader said, “[the successful bidder] seemed to come out of nowhere.”

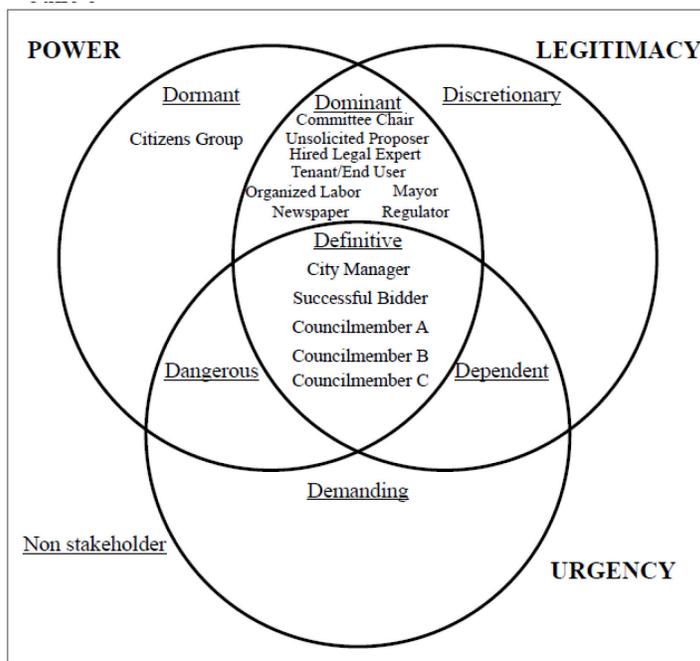


Figure 4.4. Shift Back to Dominant, June 6 – Full and Open Competition

Conversely, with the decision by the city to completely level the playing field and solicit bids from any competitors, the initial unsolicited proposal was of less value. The open and competitive process meant the initial proposer was neither being considered as the sole source nor had exclusive access, as pointed out by the committee chair in a quote

to the newspaper, “At this point, we have instructed our outside legal counsel to stop all negotiations or communications with [initial proposer],” (Vockrodt, 2017a, p. A3).

In addition to the initial proposer, reverting to a full an open competition also left the other members of the band of collaborators without urgency, relative to earlier points in the timeline. The mayor publicly stated that they was stepping back. The committee chair remained in a decision-making role, but they was no longer advocating urgently for a proposal; instead, they was participating in a process being guided by others. They both reverted to a classification of Dominant. Chief among those guiding the process was the city manager, who had to urgently manage the process, and was classified as Definitive.

Council members A, B, and C had a renewed sense of purpose as they continued to push open the door and counterbalance the mayor and the band of collaborators. These dynamics are seen more clearly in the power ratings, but for purposes of salience, the three councilmembers, at this point in the process, remained centered into the Definitive class. They joined the successful bidder and the city manager, who was the only stakeholder to remain in the Definitive class from the prelude prior to Spring 2017 through submitting bids on July 18, 2017. Despite the city manager consistently settling in the Definitive class, June and July saw shifts among many other salient stakeholders, including the newspaper, organized labor, and the regulator, who lost the attribute of urgency, just as the successful bidder had gained the attribute of urgency.

It was the last phase of the process leading to July 18 and the submission of bids that the hired legal expert acquired urgency as it related to the pre-solicitation phase. Many of the actions taken as part of the no-bid, unsolicited proposal had to be undone. A new

solicitation was crafted for the full and open competition. If attorney fees indicate urgency, then the hired legal expert was billing prodigiously and possessed the attribute of urgency, as noted in the newspaper: “[t]he council originally authorized spending up to \$475,000 in legal fees on May 18, but [hired legal expert] burned through that original \$475,000 in one month,” (Horsley, 2017, B1).

A final snapshot of the salience framework on July 18 is in Figure 4.5.

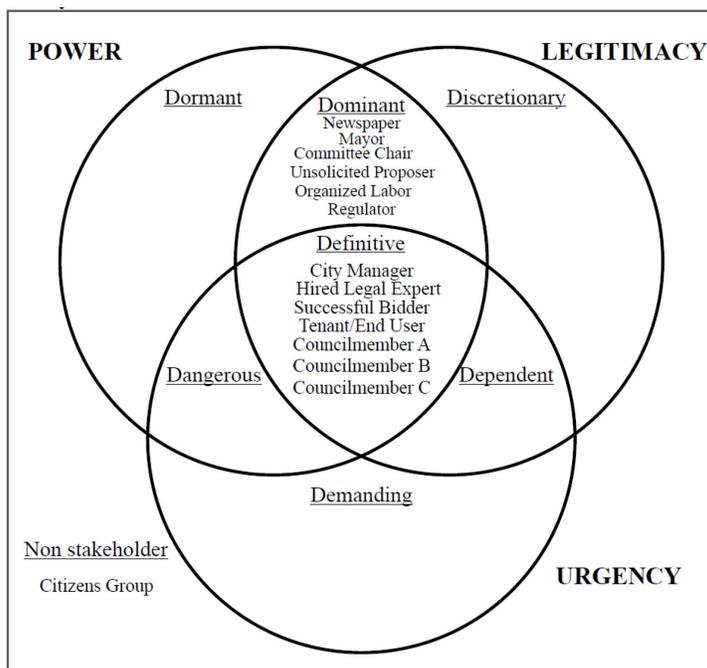


Figure 4.5. Balance Between Dominant and Definitive, July 18 – Submission of Bids

### Forms and Frequency of Social Power

Dennis Wrong (2017) categorized forms of social power based on social relationships as coercive, competent, induced, and legitimate. Coding allowed for the frequency of power-related terms by coding the interview transcripts, as seen in Table 4.4. Coding identified 78 instances of words or phrases by informants in this study, reflecting

the sentiment of one of the four types of social power. Coercive power had 21 mentions by eight informants. Competent power had 17 mentions by four informants. Induced power had seven mentions by three informants. Legitimate power had 33 mentions by seven informants. Later in this paper, I present more findings from a worksheet used to measure each type of power. I surveyed informants in this study and compiled the results by each type of power and for each highly significant stakeholder.

Table 4.4. Social Power Descriptive Codes, Definitions, and Frequency

<b>DESCRIPTIVE CODES</b>	<b>DEFINITION OF DESCRIPTIVE CODES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY OF CODED TERMS</b>
Coercive Power	for A to obtain B's compliance by threatening him with force, B must be convinced of both A's capability and willingness to use force against him. A may have succeeded in convincing B of both by advertising and displaying the means and instruments of force that [it] controls" (Wrong, 2017, p. 41).	21 instances from 8 informants
Competent Power	Competent power was a type of power where specialists or experts in particular fields possessed the requisite knowledge to solve complex problems or accommodate stakeholder needs in collaboration (Hankinson, 2009).	17 instances from 4 informants
Induced Power	"Relationships in which one party submits 'voluntarily' to the [power holder's] commands in return for economic rewards well above sheer subsistence needs" (Wrong, 2017, p. 45).	7 instances from 3 informants
Legitimate Power	"The power holder possesses an acknowledged right to command and the power subject an acknowledged obligation to obey" (Wrong, 2017, p. 49).	33 instances from 7 informants

## Nature, Degree, and Evolution of Social Power

### Coercive Power

Coercive power, for purposes of this study, was consistent with Wrong's explanation that,

[F]or A to obtain B's compliance by threatening [them] with force, B must be convinced of both A's capability and willingness to use force against him. A may have succeeded in convincing B of both by advertising and displaying the means and instruments of force that [it] controls" (2017, p. 41).

Table 4.5 contains the perceived coercive power ratings of the stakeholders on a five-point scale and across the five stages in the timeline of this study. This data is represented graphically in Figure 4.6.

Table 4.5. Perceived Coercive Power Over Time

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>	<b>May 12</b>	<b>May 30</b>	<b>June 6</b>	<b>July 18</b>
Newspaper	2.80	3.33	3.00	3.20	2.70
Mayor	4.30	4.44	4.20	3.70	3.50
City Manager	3.70	3.44	3.40	3.00	3.10
Committee Chair	3.30	3.56	3.20	3.10	3.10
Initial Proposer	2.82	3.50	2.91	2.55	2.09
Organized Labor	2.30	2.44	2.50	2.50	2.60
Citizens Group	2.09	1.90	2.00	1.36	1.18
Councilmember A	2.09	2.50	2.64	2.64	2.45
Hired Legal Expert	1.20	1.56	2.50	2.50	2.40
Successful Bidder	1.09	1.20	1.45	2.00	2.09

The numbers indicate that prior to announcing the new terminal proposal, the mayor and city manager had the highest perceived coercive power ratings on a scale of

one to five. The next highest on the list was the committee chair, also a government authority.

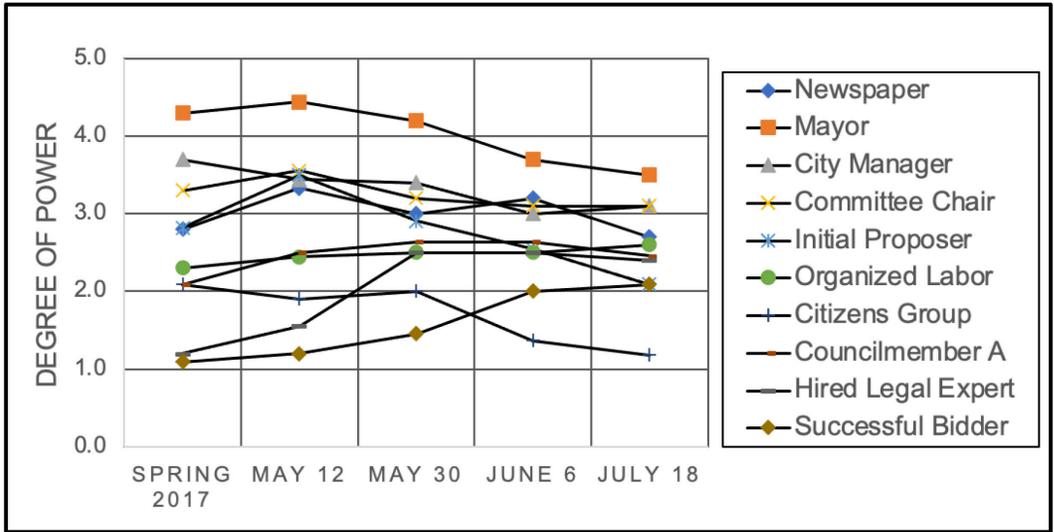


Figure 4.6. Line Chart of Perceived Coercive Power Over Time

Throughout the 10-week process, those three stakeholders maintained the high ratings for coercive power, and they remained the highest three on July 18. The mayor was always the highest, but their fellow elected official, the committee chair, was consistently one of the highest, reflecting coercive power referred to in the literature as political power (DeBussy & Kelly, 2010; Wrong, 2017). The city manager was a government authority, and the Airey (2015) observation that government authorities can use coercive power through policymaking and implementation was a possible explanation for the rating.

Reflecting on the mayor and perceived coercive power, “[h]e kind of turned into an asshole there, but [they] got it done,” said a straight-talking insider. In a weak-mayor system, the mayor had no formal authority outside the council, and they was one of 13 votes. However, as a longtime city leader asserted, “[t]he mayor used the bully pulpit very

effectively to get the project done.” This was especially true early in the timeline. The ultimate bully pulpit was on May 12 in the airport parking area when the mayor announced the new terminal proposal, and it is striking to see in Table 4.5. how at that time, their coercive power rating of 4.44 was nearly one entire point over the next highest rating, the committee chair with 3.56.

The city manager, initial proposer, and the newspaper had ratings closer to the committee chair, all with coercive power ratings of about 3.5. Ratings for all four declined as spring turned into summer, the process wore on, and it transitioned from a no-bid, unsolicited proposal to the limited competition of the Swiss challenge to a full and open competition. This transition supports a phenomenon Wrong (2019) described in his writing that coercive power might impede some collaborative process or inclusion of some stakeholders. In the earlier points in time, the research showed exclusion instead of inclusion and a lack of collaboration. In a 2019 interview, councilmember C described the mayor this way, “[c]ollaboration isn’t [their] thing. [They] basically comes up with an idea, puts it in front of a small group of people, and says, ‘We’re moving forward’” (Shelly, 2019, A3).

Peer ratings showed the citizens group and councilmember A with low coercive power ratings for Spring 2017. Informants indicated through the interview comments that coercive power for the citizens group was from their exercise of power years earlier in coercing a promise for a public vote on any airport issue from the city council through the threat of mobilizing opposition. Their coercive power fell steadily throughout the case study timeline as it became apparent that they could no longer mobilize opposition. This

comment said it all, “It didn't matter what it was, they were against it. Just because you are allowed, you make a lot of noise, that doesn't mean that you talk for everybody, you just talk for yourself.”

Councilmember A started low at 2.09 but saw the coercive power rating gradually increase to 2.64 as they found their voice and raised questions and concerns. It was councilmember A who spearheaded hiring the legal expert.

The hired legal expert went from low coercive power, 1.20 on May 12 when they had no role. On May 18, the city council hired the legal expert to advise them. Their coercive power rating went to 2.50 by the end of the month. The successful bidder was merely an observer on May 12, with a low rating of coercive power, and that power stayed relatively low throughout the process. At the end of the process, on July 18, the initial proposer and the successful bidder were given the same rating of 2.10, reflecting the former's decline and the latter's marginal increase. As an informant mused, still surprised after four years at the turn of events and reflecting the rise in the coercive power of the successful bidder, “[t]hey just seemed to come out of nowhere.” On the other hand, an informant was sympathetically referring to the unsuccessful bid of the initial proposer and said, “you never see the bullet that hits you between the eyes.”

#### Competent Power

Competent power is where specialists or experts in specific fields possess the requisite knowledge to solve complex problems or accommodate stakeholder needs in collaboration (Hankinson, 2009). Looking at Table 4.6, Perceived Competent Power Over Time, we see that grouped closest in Spring 2017 for competent power was the city

manager, 4.50, the mayor, 4.30, and the initial proposer, 4.09. Next, and continuing with a high ranking, was the committee chair, 3.50. This band of four collaborators had attended the infamous River Club lunch, where they discussed the unsolicited proposal before it was announced.

Table 4.6. Perceived Competent Power Over Time

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>	<b>May 12</b>	<b>May 30</b>	<b>June 6</b>	<b>July 18</b>
Newspaper	2.40	2.89	2.90	2.90	2.90
Mayor	4.30	4.22	3.90	3.70	3.40
City Manager	4.50	4.22	4.40	4.20	4.10
Committee Chair	3.50	3.67	3.60	3.80	3.60
Initial Proposer	4.09	4.30	3.91	3.36	3.09
Organized Labor	2.30	2.67	2.50	2.60	2.70
Citizens Group	2.00	1.80	1.55	1.55	1.27
Councilmember A	2.64	2.90	3.00	3.09	2.82
Hired Legal Expert	2.50	2.89	4.10	4.20	4.30
Successful Bidder	2.09	2.20	2.73	3.73	3.82

The band of four collaborators maintained their high rating on the day of the announcement, May 12, but interestingly, over the next 10 weeks, the city managers' competent power rating went up and down slightly but always remained among the highest of any stakeholder. In contrast, the mayor and the initial proposer had a steady drop in their ratings. The mayor went from 4.22 on May 12 to 3.40 on July 18. The initial proposer went from 4.09 on May 12 to 3.09 on July 18. The only other noteworthy drop was the citizens group, which had achieved its highest competent power rating of 2.00 in Spring 2017 but ended with the study's timeline on July 18 with a competent power rating of 1.18, nearly an entire point below the next nearest stakeholder. These shifts in competent power can be seen more easily in Figure 4.7.

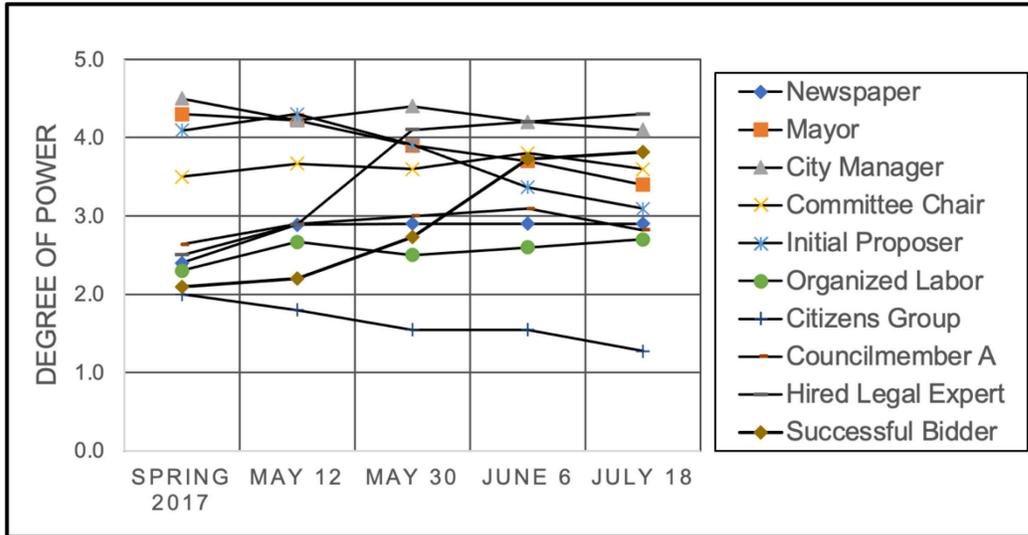


Figure 4.7. Line Chart of Perceived Competent Power Over Time

Most strikingly but not surprisingly, the hired legal expert at 2.89 and the successful bidder at 2.20 were hovering close to the rating level of the citizens group at 2.00 on May 12. However, unlike the stagnant competent power rating of the citizens group, which never got above 2.00, the hired legal expert rapidly increased the rating for competent power. In fact, at the announcement of a full and open competition on June 6, just three weeks after they was hired, the hired legal expert's competent power rating claimed the top spot at 4.20, tied with that of the city manager, who also, and always, remained high at 4.20 June 6 and at 4.10 on July 18. On the other hand, slightly below the hired legal expert and following a similar trajectory, the successful bidder had a competent power rating that increased markedly from 2.73 on May 30 at the announcement of a limited competition to 3.73 on June 6 when there was full and open competition, and then to a rating of 3.82 on July 18 when they submitted their bid but were not yet announced as

the winner. Thus, the findings indicate that a competitive process increased the perceived competent power rating of a competitor in a full and open, fair and open process.

### Induced Power

Induced power involves material rewards used by one stakeholder to derive power from another stakeholder (Beritelli & Laesser, 2011; DeBussy & Kelly, 2010). Wrong (2017) described induced power as characterizing “relationships in which one party submits ‘voluntarily’ to the [power holder's] commands in return for economic rewards well above sheer subsistence needs” (p. 45). In contrast to coercive power that involved threatening deprivations, induced power was a positive reinforcement to entice another stakeholder's obedience by offering rewards for compliance with a command (Wrong, 2017). The stakeholders’ perceived induced power over time are represented in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.8.

Table 4.7. Perceived Induced Power Over Time

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>	<b>May 12</b>	<b>May 30</b>	<b>June 6</b>	<b>July 18</b>
Newspaper	1.70	2.11	2.00	2.10	1.80
Mayor	3.90	4.00	3.40	3.30	2.90
City Manager	3.20	3.22	3.30	3.00	3.20
Committee Chair	2.80	3.00	3.20	3.20	3.30
Initial Proposer	3.82	4.20	3.91	3.09	2.64
Organized Labor	2.40	2.89	2.60	2.70	2.90
Citizens Group	1.27	1.10	1.18	1.00	1.00
Councilmember A	1.64	1.70	2.27	2.36	2.45
Hired Legal Expert	1.60	1.56	2.90	3.20	3.50
Successful Bidder	1.45	1.50	1.91	3.09	3.55

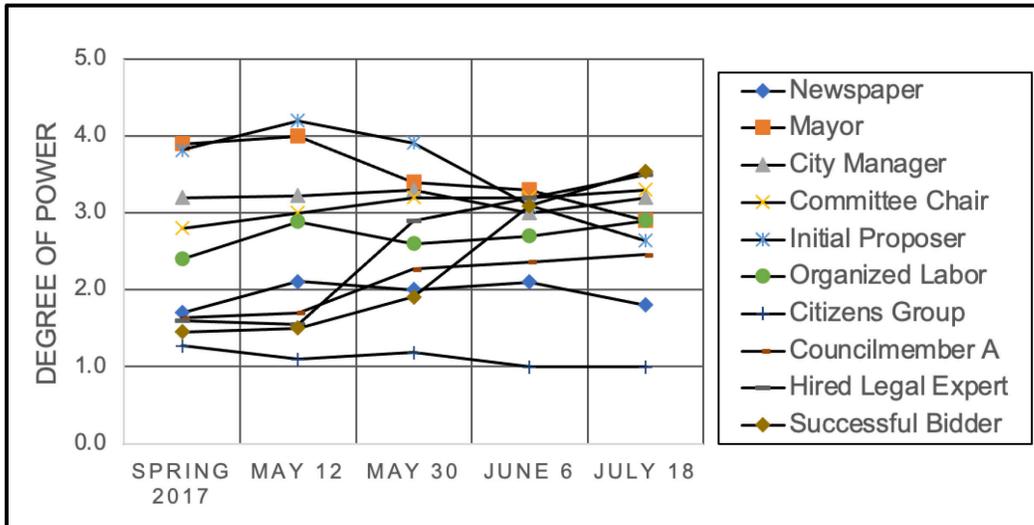


Figure 4.8. Line Chart of Perceived Induced Power Over Time

By June 6, the mayor and the initial proposer had high induced power ratings, at 3.30 and 3.09, respectively. The findings show that there was a narrowing of the induced power ratings among almost all stakeholders at the time of the full and open competition. On June 6, excluding the outlier of the inactive citizens group, the other stakeholders all found their induced power ratings within a band between 2.10 and 3.20.

The successful bidder was trending up. An informant said it this way, “Let’s be honest, when this started, it was a done deal for the initial proposal. [Successful bidder] didn’t have a chance in hell.” But as it became evident that the outcome was not a foregone conclusion, power ratings were shifting. The initial proposer was trending down, most likely based on the same rationale, that while “[m]any people believed the project was just cooked for the initial proposer,” that belief was shifting.

Organized labor was below the predominant grouping. The findings indicate they stepped back from participating in the fight or publicly talking about it. It appeared they

just wanted to work with the winner. Much farther below in the rating for induced power were councilmember A and the newspaper. Neither could induce others. Similarly, the citizens group was nearly a flat line from start to finish: 1.27, 1.10, 1.18, 1.00, and 1.00.

#### Legitimate Power

Wrong (2017) viewed legitimate power as when “the power holder possesses an acknowledged right to command and the power subject an acknowledged obligation to obey” (p. 49). Legitimate power was also seen as “the right to another's compliance with directives that fall within the scope of that authority, regardless of the other's feelings” (Ford & Johnson, 1998, p.18). How the stakeholders perceived legitimate power over time is represented in Table 4.8 and Figure 4.9.

Table 4.8. Perceived Legitimate Power Over Time

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>	<b>May 12</b>	<b>May 30</b>	<b>June 6</b>	<b>July 18</b>
Newspaper	2.70	3.22	3.30	3.40	3.20
Mayor	4.60	4.67	4.60	4.10	4.00
City Manager	4.20	4.22	4.20	3.80	3.80
Committee Chair	3.90	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.90
Initial Proposer	3.82	4.20	3.36	3.00	2.73
Organized Labor	2.90	3.11	3.00	3.20	3.20
Citizens Group	1.82	1.80	1.36	1.36	1.27
Councilmember A	2.27	2.60	3.36	3.55	2.91
Hired Legal Expert	1.80	2.00	3.00	3.50	3.80
Successful Bidder	1.64	1.70	2.09	2.45	3.36

Once again, regarding legitimate power, from Spring 2017 until May 30, the band of collaborators maintains the highest ratings. Throughout the 10-week process, the only one of those four who had a significant decline in the legitimate power rating was the initial proposer, who fell from a high of 4.20 on May 12 to 2.73 on July 18.

Correspondingly, the most significant legitimate power ratings increase went to the hired legal expert and the successful offeror, who finished high at 3.80 and 3.36 respectively, but no higher than the mayor, city manager, and committee chair at 4.00, 3.80, and 3.90 respectively. A seemingly resentful decision-maker said of the hired legal expert, “[They] became very influential in the process in terms of... [e]levating the conversation about risks that didn’t necessarily materialize, they got people all nervous about the process.” Another city hall observer said of the hired legal expert that “[h]e kind of inserted [them]self into the process.” Moreover, while no one denied their role in the process, a knowledgeable stakeholder opined on the hired legal expert’s opinion on the outcome, “we ended up with a weaker development agreement . . .”

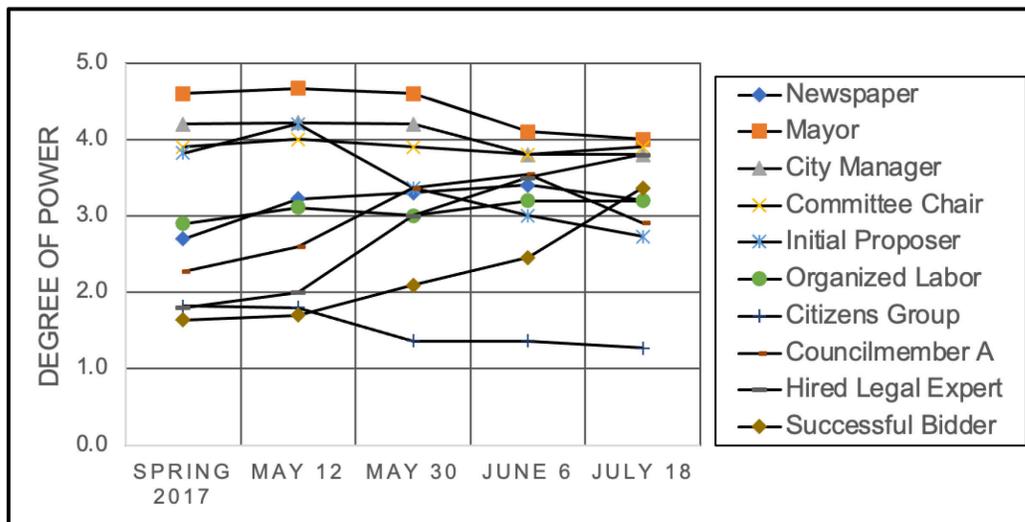


Figure 4.9. Line Chart of Perceived Legitimate Power Over Time

The newspaper broke the story that started the process, first as no-bid and then after various iterations and gnashing of teeth as a full and open competition. Someone in that initial editorial board meeting described it this way, “Okay, newspaper, you guys have the

scoop. Now, this is going to happen.” Throughout the timeline of this study, the newspaper’s power of every type was consistent. There was a slight up and down shift for coercive power and nearly no shift in rating for competent power after the first week, which saw a rise from 2.5 to 3.

Similarly, there was nearly no change in the low rating for induced power. However, legitimate power is steadily through the process, remaining within a relatively narrow band of 2.5 to 3.5. Slow and steady or fast and furious, whatever the perspective of peer-perceptions, they were consistent from May through July.

### **Summary of Findings**

This chapter organized and reported on the case study’s main findings, in alignment with the first three of five research questions, which are summarized as: who are salient stakeholders; in what ways are stakeholders salient; what are the forms and frequency of social power exercised by highly salient stakeholders, and what is the nature, degree, and evolution of social power?

What I found in the research was that archival documents informed the question of who are salient stakeholders. This led to creating a list of informants and stakeholders and then a deeper inquiry into salience. From these findings, a Highly Salient Stakeholder group was developed that included the individuals and organizations labeled as the newspaper, mayor, city manager, committee chair, councilmember A, councilmembers B, and C, hired legal expert, and the successful bidder.

Freeman (1984) asked who and what really counts. Mitchell et al. (1997) questioned stakeholder salience, i.e., primacy in a relationship. The findings were

grounded in these foundational theoretical approaches and literature. This included Wrong's (2019) types of power and their frequency in the data. Figures and tables were used to illustrate salience attributes and bases of power over the study's timeline. The findings showed salience attributes among the band of four collaborators that placed them in the Definitive and then Dominant classification. Other stakeholders also moved between classifications over time.

Social power was measured and displayed based on the worksheets completed by informants, some of whom were also stakeholders. Stakeholder power shifted as they and their peers exerted their power. Additionally, a comparison between self-assessed power and peer-assessed power suggested that many stakeholders do not know themselves in the same way others know them or perceive them. Any divergence is relevant for managing stakeholder dynamics.

The next chapter explores the implications of the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders over time. Further analysis will study the degrees of power measured by self-assessment and peer-assessment as indicated by the worksheets. These two perceived power ratings were frequently not in parallel. Finally, the chapter will look further into how social power by salient stakeholders influences the effectiveness or success of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS

This case study examines stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. This chapter analyzes the findings presented in Chapter Four, focusing on answers to the final two research questions: what are the implications of the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders over time; and how does the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders influence the effectiveness or success of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership?

First, I inquire about the implications of the exercise of social power in the pre-solicitation phase of the airport new terminal project. After reviewing the finding on the types of power, the research shows that stakeholders exercised power, and there were changes in power dynamics among and between stakeholders throughout the study timeline, with a few particularly significant shifts and trends. These shifts and trends had implications on the balance of power and how the process played out. I will also analyze these implications.

Second, the exercise of social power and the changes also influenced the effectiveness or success of the pre-solicitation phase. I will also analyze the findings to identify those influences and how different stakeholders perceived them. There were definite consequences in the coming weeks, months, and years. After the July 18 submission of bids, the initial proposer was disqualified from the selection competition. The successful bidder was awarded the contract. The private financing option was abandoned in place of public financing. Committee chair and councilmember A faced off

in the election for mayor in 2019. Through all this, the airport new terminal project went from a budget of just under \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion.

### **Implications of the Exercise of Social Power**

An analysis of the numbers in Table 5.1. and the line chart in Figure 5.1. shows aggregate power over time. The figure illustrates the implications of the exercise of stakeholder power where aggregate power among most stakeholders draws toward a midpoint, or narrows, throughout the summer of 2017, the timeline of the pre-solicitation phase under study. From a number's perspective, the band of four collaborators maintained high power ratings through to the end on July 18 of between 2.63 and 3.55. The mayor was 3.45, the city manager was 3.55, and the committee chair was 3.48. Not surprisingly, the initial proposer's aggregate power rating dropped over the research timeline from a high of 4.05 on May 12 to 2.63 on July 18. The implications of their exercise of social power were a significant decline in aggregate power. As an informant who had a seat at the table throughout the entire process said, "everybody thought [initial proposer] was gonna get the job." At least through early June, that sentiment is borne out by the numbers when the initial proposer was still at 3.00. The initial proposer attempted to maximize their social power as the procurement process for the new terminal turned from a no-bid, unsolicited proposal to a full and open competition. One keen government observer described:

[They] thought they had enough political influence with the team they had built, right? So [initial proposer] and their leadership group went out and beat the bushes, so to speak, politically to try to win that deal. They formed the 'hometown team'

thing, tried to get as many contractors behind them as they could, those types of things, and at the end of the day, that obviously didn't work out.

Table 5.1. Perceived Aggregate Power Over Time

Stakeholder	Spring 2017	May 12	May 30	June 6	July 18
Newspaper	2.40	2.89	2.80	2.90	2.65
Mayor	4.28	4.33	4.03	3.70	3.45
City Manager	3.90	3.78	3.83	3.50	3.55
Committee Chair	3.38	3.56	3.48	3.48	3.48
Initial Proposer	3.64	4.05	3.52	3.00	2.64
Organized Labor	2.48	2.78	2.65	2.75	2.85
Citizens Group	1.80	1.65	1.52	1.32	1.18
Councilmember A	2.16	2.43	2.82	2.91	2.66
Hired Legal Expert	1.78	2.00	3.13	3.35	3.50
Successful Bidder	1.57	1.65	2.05	2.82	3.20

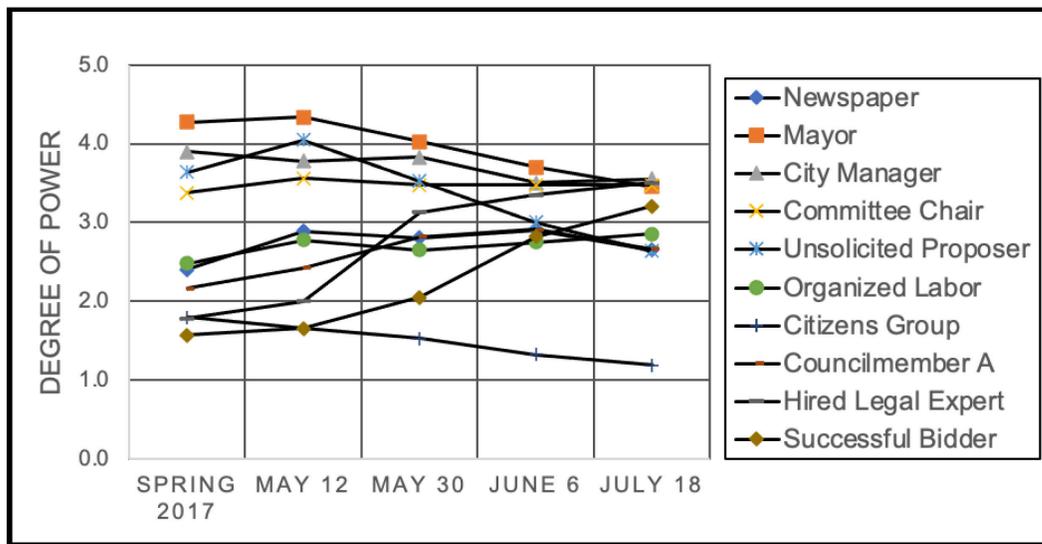


Figure 5.1. Line Chart of Perceived Aggregate Power Over Time

Conversely, the perceived aggregate power as shown in Table 5.1. rated the hired legal expert at 2.0 on May 12 and the successful bidder at 1.65. As noted earlier, neither had claimed power in any visible way at that point in the timeline. They were both observers. However, as they asserted themselves and exercised their power over time, the power ratings rose to 3.5 and 3.2, respectively, by the time bids were submitted. In particular, regarding the hired legal expert, the power rating was second highest of all the stakeholders at only .05 below the city manager. A long-time city hall insider said the hired legal expert “wielded, I think, significant power because once [they] was brought in, [they] kind of controlled the process.” This implication of this rise in power is significant because, in essence, the expert was frequently deferred to. Other councilmembers ceded power to the hired legal expert or even magnified and multiplied the expert’s power. Here are a few illustrations of that power as reported on by the newspaper: “Outside counsel is conducting a review before the City Council commits to a deal” (Robertson, 2017, A1). Regarding the right of first refusal granted to the initial proposer, “City Hall then reversed that position (Swiss challenge) when lawyers said such an approach could leave Kansas City vulnerable to a lawsuit” (Vockrodt, 2017b, C1). The reversal of power between the initial proposer as compared with the hired legal expert was highlighted starkly in a quote to the newspaper from the committee chair, who said, “[a]t this point, we have instructed our outside legal counsel to stop all negotiations or communications with [initial proposer]” (Robertson, 2017, A1).

Consistently at the bottom of the aggregate power rating was the citizens group. An article in the newspaper dated June 25 entitled “‘Original sins’: Early errors erode [the

airport] project perception, progress as deadlines loom,” illustrated the citizens group's position and the perception of them. “Among those critics was [community group leader], who in recent years has emerged as a persistent City Hall gadfly against its major priorities” (Vockrodt, 2017b, C1). The citizens group was the outlier in the list of stakeholders.

Figure 5.1. illustrates the line chart showing aggregate power over time

More revealing, however, is a radar chart using data from the worksheets to further analyze and answer the fourth research question: What are the implications of the exercise of social power by salient stakeholders over time? Figure 5.2, a measurement of aggregate power in Spring 2017, shows disparity among and between stakeholders. Skewing was the mayor and band of collaborators in the airport new terminal proposal to the right half of the figure. The hired legal expert and the successful bidder were low because they had not yet asserted nor inserted themselves into the process.

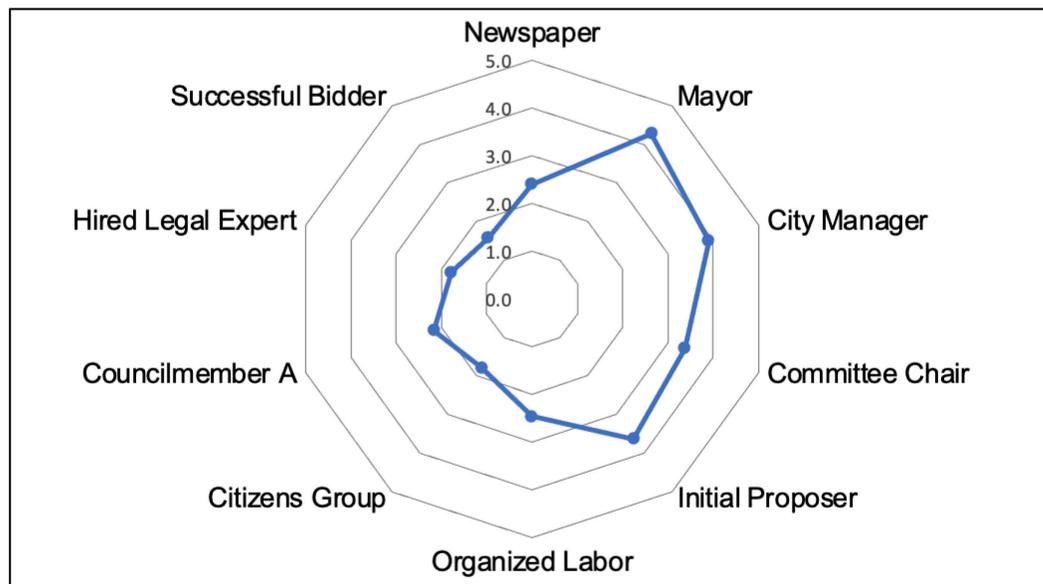


Figure 5.2. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, Spring 2017 – Prelude

On the day of the announcement of the new terminal proposal, May 12, Figure 5.3 showed that the band of four collaborators were the only stakeholders who had more than a midpoint power rating of 3.00. They were standing in front of cameras asserting their power, as they announced the unsolicited proposal, which the newspaper referred to as an agreement: “[t]he city has negotiated the agreement privately. There was no opportunity for other firms to prepare counter-proposals or to offer their own suggestions on financing” (Vockrodt, 2017b, C2).

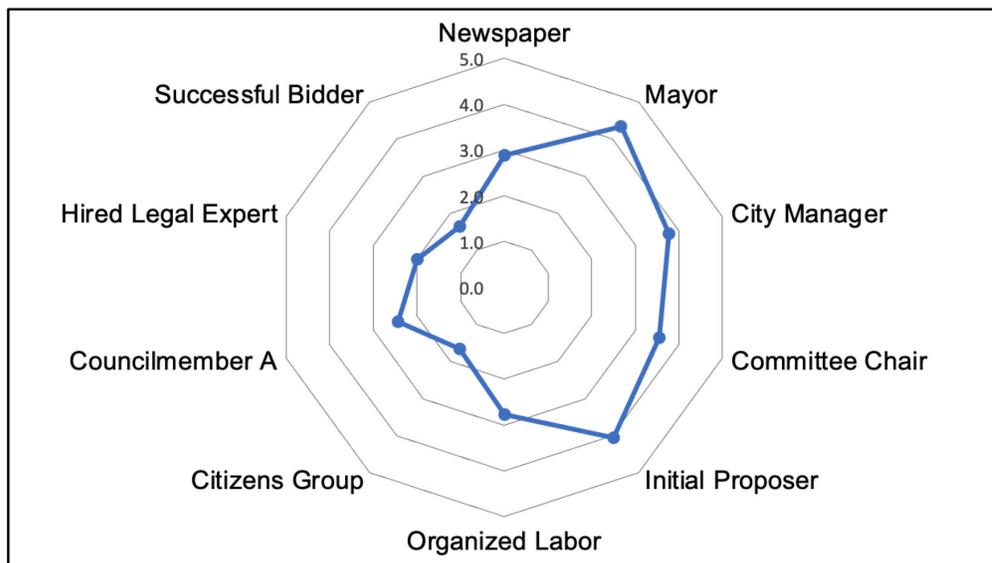


Figure 5.3. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, May 12 – The Announcement

The newspaper also found its voice and relevance in the topic. Clearly stated, “It was a journalistic crusade,” a lifelong journalist said. An implication of this exercise of power was the number of stories and editorials from the newspaper and the level of derision aimed at the newspaper. For example, the newspaper got significant negative attention in the mayor's book when they wrote about the new terminal proposal:

Upon being informed of the [initial proposer's] plan, one of the city councilmembers called our local daily newspaper, The [newspaper], and told them that we had engaged in a backroom deal to build the new airport. My third first thought was, 'Bullshit, if this is a backroom deal, then why did we tell the city council?' [The newspaper] revealed that [the reporter] was going to run a story exposing the supposedly nefarious contract unless someone went to the [newspaper's] offices to meet with [the reporter] about this. So reluctantly, but absolutely needing to set the record straight, [the city manager] and I met with [the reporter] and the [newspaper's] editorial board at the newspaper's office" (James, 2019, pp. 76-77).

The mayor and city manager responded to the newspaper's exercise of power by going to the newspaper's office in person to answer questions and explain themselves and the proposal. Also in attendance at that meeting with the editorial board were the committee chair and the initial proposer. The band was all together to face the music from the newspaper, in an explicit display of power by all involved.

Other informants had varying views about the newspaper too. There was no shortage of opinions, and they ranged from positive to negative, measured to emotional. A lifelong resident, community leader, and frequent airport user said, "[The newspaper] grabbed the sensational headline without doing a whole lot of work and without looking at the real issues, and then just went to print with it." Battles between city hall and a local paper may be expected, but over the timeline of the case study, a veteran of city politics observed that the newspaper's editorial board would call on city hall to take a particular

action, and then city hall would take that action. The observation appears to be believable. On May 17, the editorial said, “We support the hiring of outside legal counsel to review the agreement” (Helling, 2017, A6). On May 18, the city council voted to hire outside legal counsel. On May 27, the editorial headline was “Our [airport] checklist – more details and alternative proposals needed, (Helling, 2017, A6). Three days later, on May 30, the mayor announced competitive bidding.

Between May 12 and July 18, the newspaper’s aggregate power rating consistently remained between 2.70 and 2.90 and slightly below the scale’s mid-point rating of 3. The implications of this are important when viewed in a relationship with other stakeholders. As is seen in Figure 5.4., by May 30, when a full and open competition was announced, the mayor and the band had diminished slightly, but more notable is that the other side of the radar chart, namely the hired legal expert and councilmember A had increased in power significantly, to 3.12 and 2.81 respectively. Thus, the power distribution remained unbalanced and still resulted in a lopsided shape favoring the mayor and collaborators. The radar chart using data on May 30 clearly illustrated that power was shifting.

Organized labor may have lost some of its power relative to other stakeholders, which also had implications. There is also an indication that organized labor was not speaking with a completely unified voice, ironically, which may have diminished their potential power. Fundamentally, while most labor unions expressed full support for the unsolicited proposal, practically speaking, they were interested in the jobs created by any successful bid that led to a new airport terminal because labor unions were sure to gain jobs on the project, which continued to be rated near the bottom of the scale.

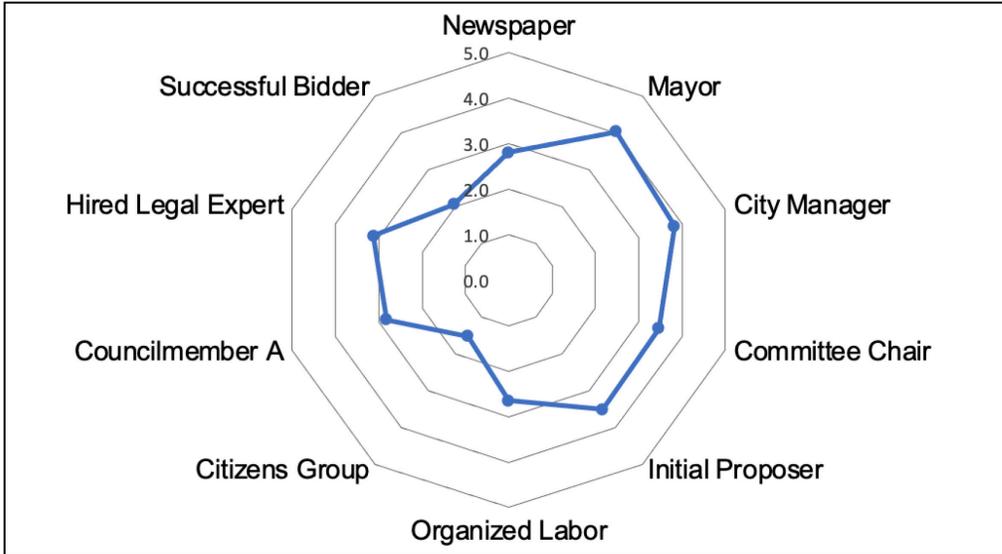


Figure 5.4. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, May 30 – Limited Competition

While not a perfect circle, Figure 5.5 indicates that by June 6, power was almost equally distributed among most stakeholders, with the obvious and constant exception of the citizens group.

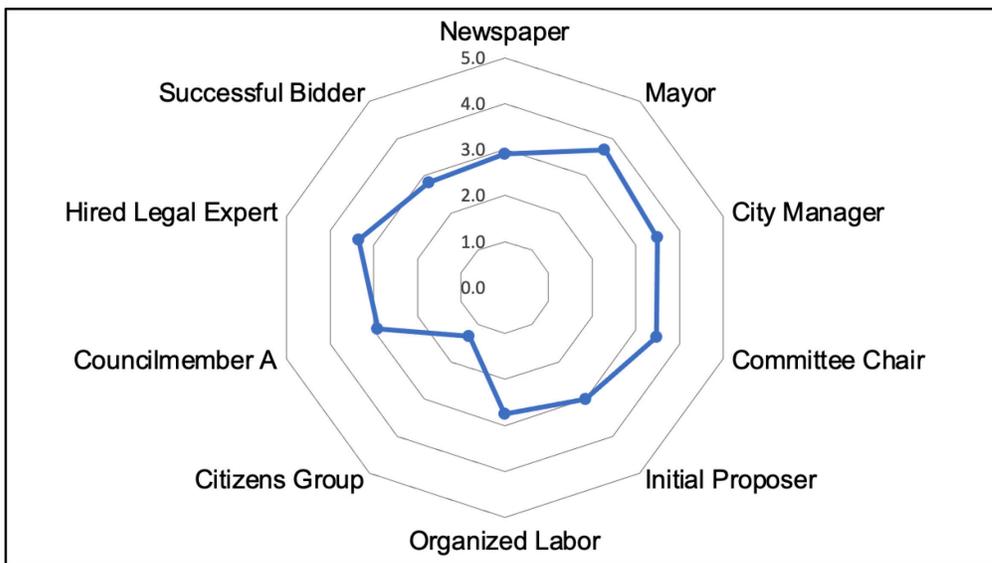


Figure 5.5. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, June 6 – Full and Open Competition

With a full and open competition, the initial proposer and the successful bidder were supposed to be on a level playing field, and they were presumably both doing everything they could to win the contract. This is consistent with the literature that explains the exercise of power as a stakeholder's way to maximize their opportunities while considering their interests and objectives in the decision-making process (Aaltonen et al., 2008; Frooman, 1999; Hendry, 2005). Another implication of the balance between the leading voices on the city council was highlighting two primary factions. On the issue of the airport new terminal, one faction appeared to be with the committee chair (sometimes referred to by informants as “pro-mayor”) and the other with councilmember A (sometimes referred to as “anti-mayor”). A pro-mayor informant described the experience like this: “I’m not sure anything [they] could have done could have made some of the folks on the council happy. I mean, [they] could have brought them a bucket of gold, and they would’ve complained that it wasn’t golden enough.” The pro-mayor group’s predominant power ratings were offset or counterbalanced by the anti-mayor group that emerged, consisting primarily of councilmembers A, B, and C. This occurred at the point in the process when it became clear in part through the influence of the higher legal expert, that because the no-bid proposal gave way to a full and open competition, each of those council members would have one vote, just as the mayor would have one vote, and the committee chair would have one vote. Additionally, in early June 2017, it was evident that the initial proposer, despite their efforts, would have no procedural advantage over competing proposals.

As the pre-solicitation phase came to an end on July 18, four bidders emerged as viable competitors in the full and open competition, the range of power ratings narrowed, and there was a more equitable distribution of power, thereby rounding out the radar chart measuring stakeholder power, as shown in Figure 5.6. The narrowing of the power ratings is most evident in the line chart of Figure 5.7., which shows aggregate power ratings moving closer together over time. Analysis of the ratings and movement of Wrong’s (2019) specific power types (coercive, competent, induced, and legitimate) is covered later in this chapter. What was not yet known was that the initial proposer’s final proposal would be disqualified, and therefore not available for consideration by the voting members of the council.

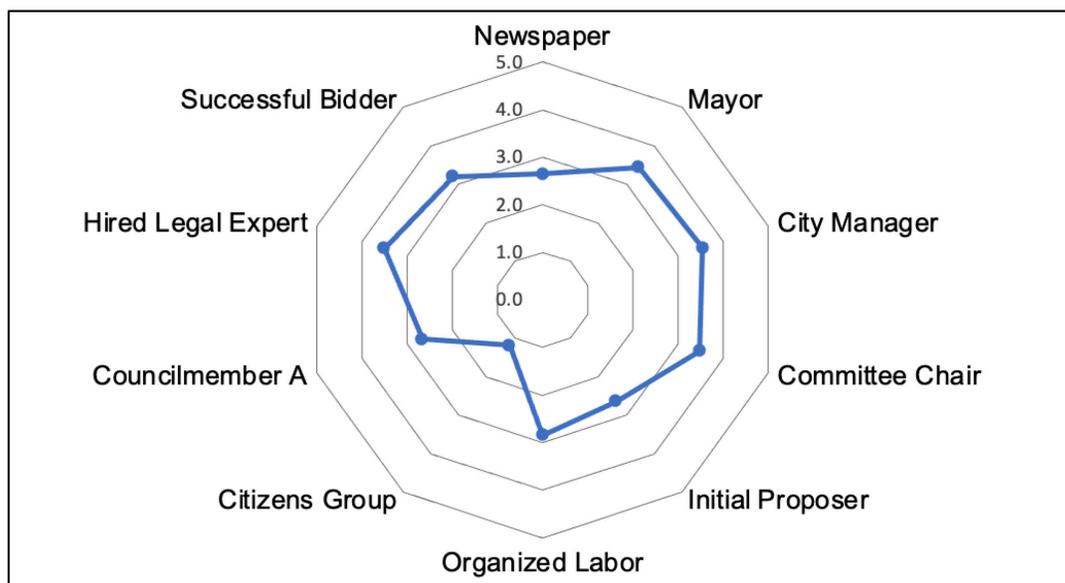


Figure 5.6. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, July 18 – Submission of Bids

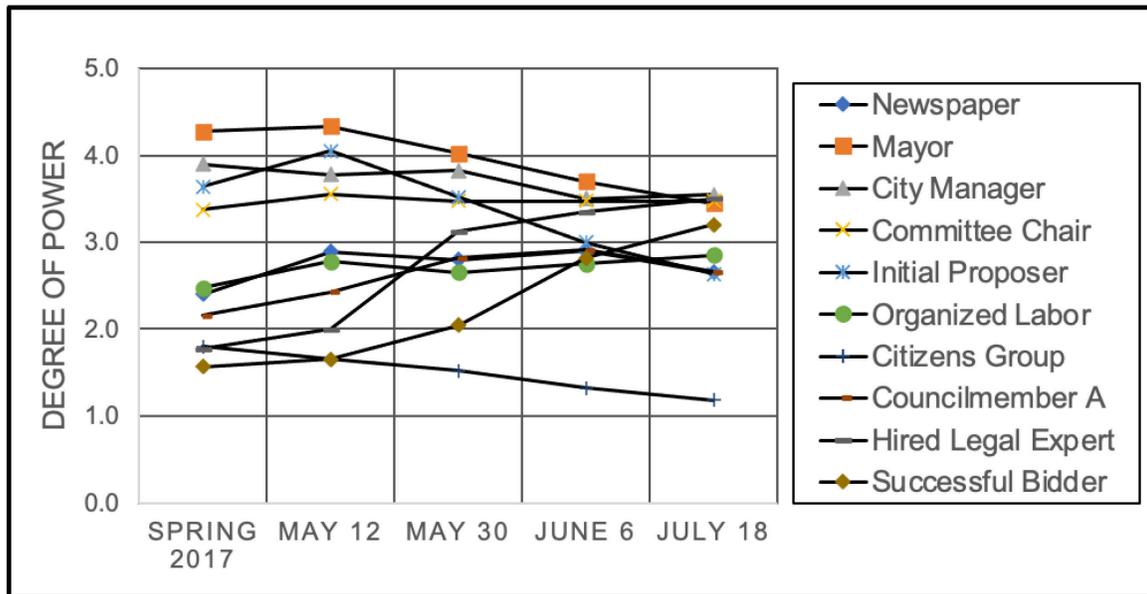


Figure 5.7. Line Graph of Aggregate Stakeholder Power Over Time

### How Stakeholders Saw Themselves

A highly significant stakeholder addressed the theme of self-awareness and self-assessment in an unprompted declaration and summed it up this way:

“So, I learned a couple of things early on in my life, here is the number one, the first thing, the most valuable thing anybody can have, so, a full-length mirror. You need to know exactly what you look like, what you act like, what our power is, who’s behind you.”

To better understand perspectives and assessments of stakeholders, I analyzed data illustrating how stakeholders rated themselves as compared to how others rated them, looking at each type of power and aggregate power. There were a few interesting insights from the research. In order to assure anonymity, I will write about the data in broader terms; however, the analysis helps inform the research and answer the research questions.

Strikingly, one stakeholder had a self-rating within one-half a point of the peer-assessment at every point in the timeline. You can see in Figure 5.8 when we graph Anonymous Stakeholder 1’s self-rating against the peer assessments, and one line looked like a shadow of the other. The Oracle of Delphi gets credit for the guidance “know thyself.” That appeared to be the situation here. The significance of accurate self-awareness in a multi-stakeholder endeavor like a public-private partnership would be an awareness of where and in what ways the self-aware actor could effectively exert their power, “what our power is, who’s behind you,” as the informant above said.

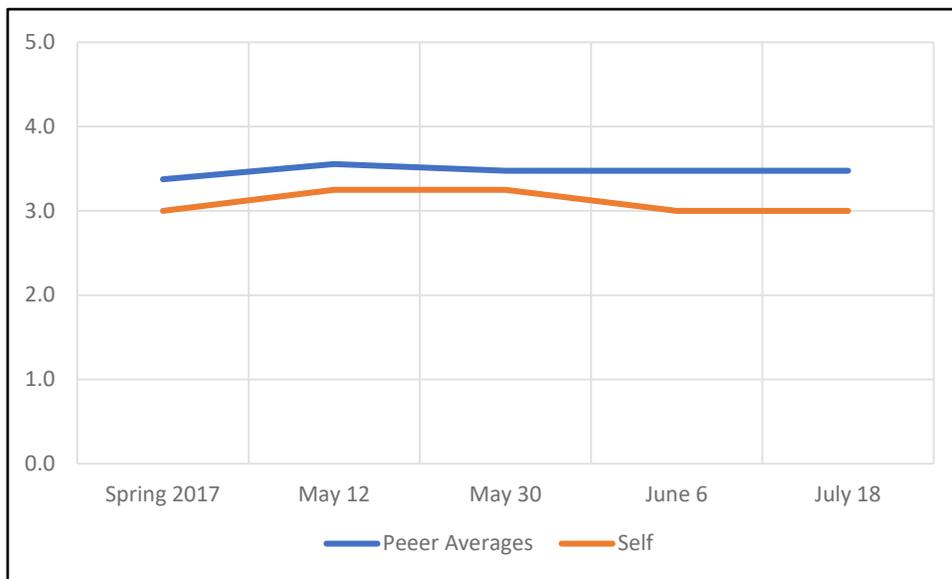


Figure 5.8. Anonymous Stakeholder #1: Aggregate Power – Self-Perception Compared with Peer Perception

Self-assessments and peer-assessments reflect simple perceptions. However, the significance is that the perceptions are about highly significant stakeholders in the case made by informants with personal knowledge and involvement. If perception is reality,

how one is perceived and how one perceives oneself has implications on how to effectively exercise power on the project and process.

Looking at the data presented differently, power ratings by types of power proved even more interesting. When analyzing self-assessment by type of power for stakeholders, there is consistent divergence. Nearly every stakeholder assessed their coercive power below the rating given to them by their peers. That divergence was considerable. In a majority of the responses, the divergence was greater than two points. Figure 5.10. displays the data from one stakeholder who rated their coercive power a full three points lower than the average peer rating. An analysis of induced power shows similar results, although not as extreme. This is significant because coercive power, A's ability to obtain B's compliance by the threat of force, may have a distasteful connotation and may be viewed as undesirable in self-assessments. However, if peers view a stakeholder as exercising coercive power, that stakeholder will be better able to utilize that power (responsibly?) if their self-awareness is consistent with peer awareness. For one stakeholder, the divergence regarding coercive power was 3.02, but the divergence for competent power was 0.31, and for legitimate power, it was 0.40, shown in Figure 5.9. This suggests a desire to possibly under-rate a perceived negative type of power, such as coercive, and over-rate a perceived positive type of power, e.g., such as competent power or legitimate power.

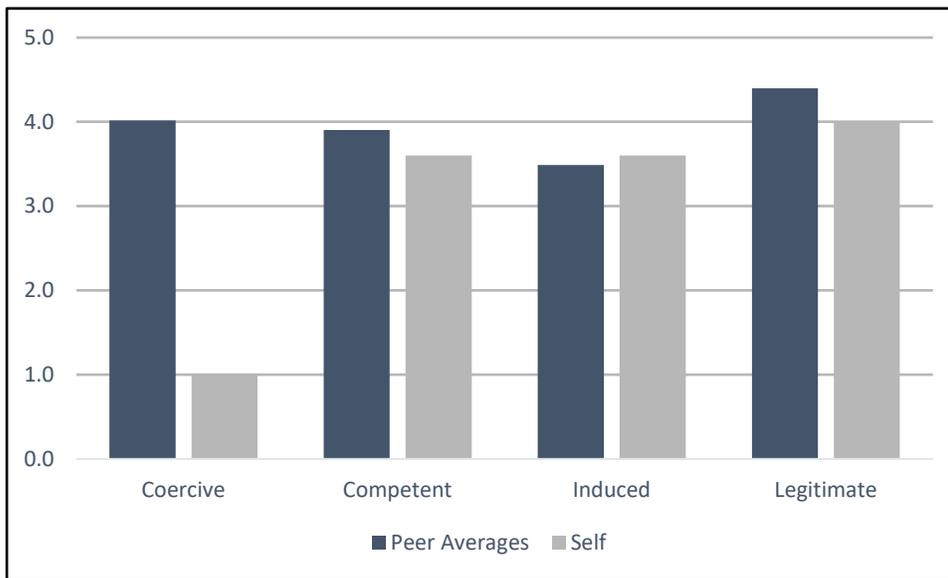


Figure 5.9. Anonymous Stakeholder #2: Types of Power – Self-Perception Compared with Peer Perception

An analysis of the data shows a consistent pattern where coercion and inducement were under-rated and competence and legitimacy were over-rated in stakeholder self-assessments. However, one stakeholder boldly bucked this pattern. An analysis of Figure 5.10 shows that a unique individual rated themselves much higher than peers for coercive power, 1.07 points higher, and induced power, 1.21 points higher. The self-rating for legitimate power was very high at 4.40 and very close to the peer rating of 4.05, but the self-rating for competent power was at 2.80, below the midpoint, and 1.48 points below peers rating them for competent power. In a sentence, this stakeholder felt they had more power to coerce and induce than peers felt they had, and peers thought they was more competent than they rated themselves. Is this a humble brag? Humble about competence but bragging about coercive, induced, and legitimate power? The significance of the analysis of all this data is the stakeholder has power of every type in their perception and the perception of other informants.

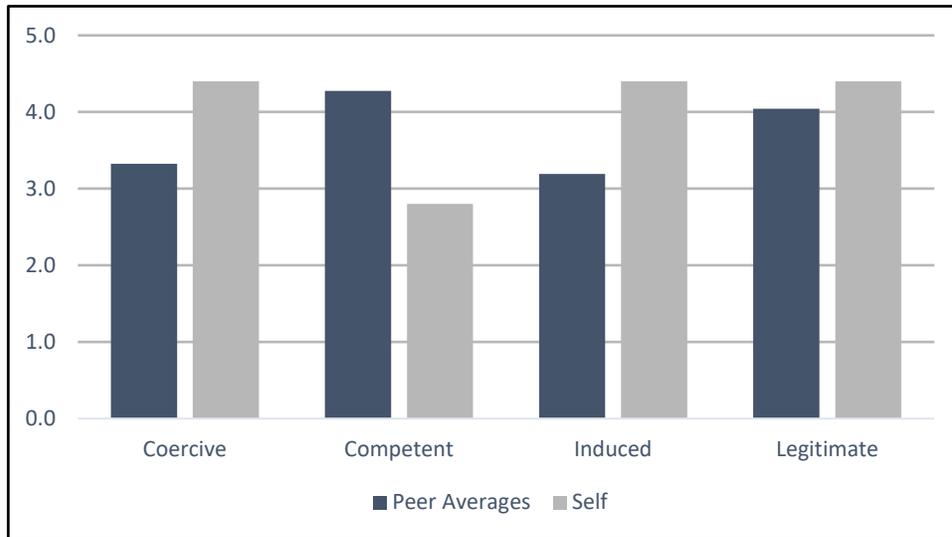


Figure 5.10. Anonymous Stakeholder #3: Types of Power – Self-Perception Compared with Peer Perception

More frequently, as noted above, coercive and induced power were under-rated by stakeholders, and competent and legitimate power were over-rated compared to how their peers saw them. Further analysis revealed a stark example of how this could be misinterpreted. Stakeholder #1, discussed previously, who seemed to channel the Oracle of Delphi with an impressively accurate self-assessment in the aggregate, as seen in Figure 5.8., missed the mark in the self-assessment on each type of power. But they was wrong in a nearly perfect balance that offset the results to create an aggregate power rating impressively close to the peer aggregate power rating. Figure 5.11. shows that the underestimations of coercive and induced power perfectly balanced the overestimations of competent and legitimate power, resulting in an aggregate power rating across events nearly identical to the power rating given by peers. The implication is that informants, peers, and scholars risk misreading the self-assessed and peer-assessed power of participants.

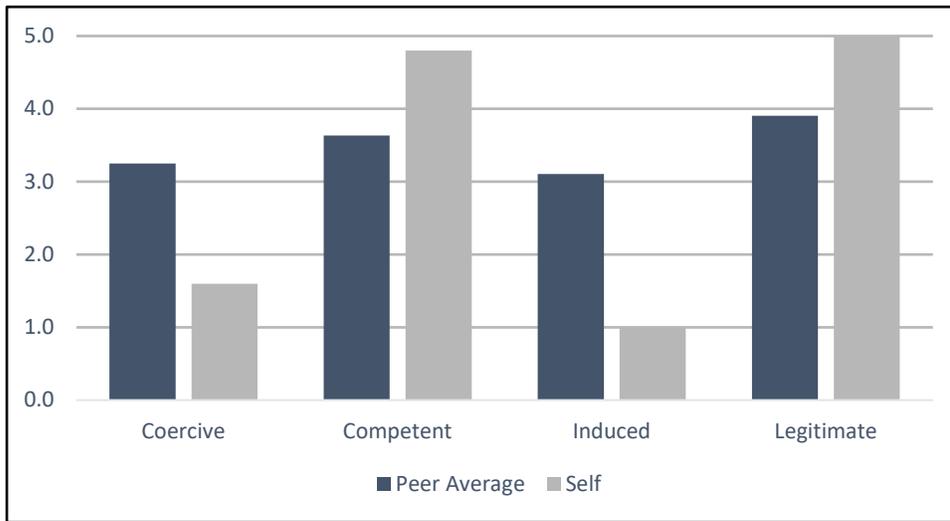


Figure 5.11. Anonymous Stakeholder #1: Types of Power – Self-Perception Compared with Peer Perception

### **Influence On Effectiveness or Success**

In the case of the airport new terminal project, effectiveness or success for nearly all stakeholders was getting an agreement for the design and construction of the new terminal. This was clearly stated several times, including, “[h]e kind of turned into an asshole there, but [they] got it done,” and “saying ‘we’ve got to get this project, let’s do it,’ I don’t know if it would have been as time-sensitive or as urgent and it may have limped along and not gotten done,” and “[the mayor] and [city manager] were all about getting the airport done,” and “[the mayor] wanted to make sure we did whatever we needed to do to get a new airport.”

The newspaper and some councilmembers complained and called for a fair and transparent process, but even they joined in to support the new terminal. Organized labor was watching. Of all the stakeholders for this case, the citizens group was the only highly significant stakeholder on the list that openly opposed the new terminal. The newspaper pointed this out, “Among those critics was [community group leader], who in recent years

has emerged as a persistent City Hall gadfly against its major priorities” (Vockrodt, 2017b, C1). The mayor labeled the group the “Citizens Against Virtually Everything,” or CAVE people (James, 2019, p. 64), but they exercised so little power in 2017 that their position was not clearly defined nor delivered. Despite the newspaper’s criticism of the events of that summer being a “hush-hush botchathon” and a “hopelessly bungled process,” the newspaper supported the agreement that finally emerged for the design and construction of a new terminal.

The mayor influenced every aspect of the process and project, even when they stepped back slightly after a full and open competition was announced. The power they exercised through their position, even if the position of mayor in a weak mayor city was little more than the bully pulpit, was critical to achieving the objective of delivering a new terminal. An informant said, “the mayor essentially was willing to be out front and declare this thing was going to happen; we’ve got a plan. I think it’s a great lesson (in leadership).” In their book, the mayor described it this way: “we used to be known as a city that would never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity. That’s no longer the case” (James, 2019, 65).

By Summer 2017, it might have been viewed as unwise to bet against the mayor. They counted as their successes while mayor a “downtown streetcar, voter approval of \$800 million in bonds for infrastructure projects, restoration of the Beacon Hill neighborhood, construction of the East Patrol police station and crime lab, and dedicated funding for city parks” (Shelly, 2019, A1). An ally on the airport vote said it this way, “[the mayor] and [city manager] were all about getting the airport done, checking that box,

and moving on to the next big thing.” Without exception, informants acknowledged that the mayor led a change in the nature of the discussion.

“What happened here is it became a debate over how we’re going to build an airport, not whether we’re going to build an airport. Something happened over those five months of, you know, sometimes fractious political and legal drama, where [the community] came to expect they were going to build an airport. Maybe it was a brilliant political strategy because the public sentiment had gone wildly opposite of what it had been a couple of years earlier.”

Even detractors acknowledged that the mayor could claim victory for moving the conversation. It was mentioned numerous times by informed and engaged stakeholders that “the conversation changed on that day (May 12). It wasn’t about if we were getting a new airport (terminal); it was about how we were going to get it.” The new terminal now has a price tag of \$1.5 billion and is scheduled to open in 2023.

An analysis of the data also led to a reasonable conclusion that the mayor and their band overestimated their power. A decision-maker observed about the city council, “those guys weren't going to put up with the mayor sort of jamming, speaking colloquially, like jamming this thing down their throats, and you know, that wasn't going to work.” At the mid-point in their second term, nearly two years into a discordant council, there were fissures in the cohesiveness and even collegiality of the council. It was widely reported that the newspaper was alerted to the initial unsolicited proposal by a councilmember. The mayor retold the story to a reporter: “[Their] office was getting ready to brief councilmembers when word leaked, [the mayor] says. ‘The next thing you know, they go

running to the newspaper and say there was some kind of a deal. There was no deal” (Shelly, 2019, A1).

A summary of events reported in the local press described the new terminal proposal and process this way: “[m]ost councilmembers were stunned. [The newspaper’s] editorial board went ballistic. The council hired its own legal counsel to figure out what to do. [The mayor] was forced to back down and put the contract out for bid, kicking off a mess of a process that blundered on for months” (Shelly, 2019, A1). And the newspaper subsequently described the events of Summer 2017 as a “hush-hush botchathon. . .” (Vockrodt, 2017c, A5).

The influence on the effectiveness shown by the city manager was as a steady hand. Initially, the city manager was aligned with the mayor and in the band of four collaborators, e.g., “[s]o reluctantly, but absolutely needing to set the record straight, [city manager] and I met with [reporter] and the [newspaper’s] editorial board at the newspaper’s office.” The city manager also consistently exercised all four types of power at the highest rating, the most consistently high rating of any stakeholder across the entire case study timeline. This high power rating may have aided in preventing the collapse of the whole process. By their position, they maintained legitimacy, or the kind of legitimate power described by Astley and Sachdeva (1984) associated with one's formal position within society.

Practically speaking, while the mayor intended to have the city council vote on the proposal within a few weeks of their announcement, undoing and re-doing a procurement process for a controversial \$1 billion high profile construction project still was accomplished within three months. The city manager held this process together, and it was

noticed, “I think most people would consider [them] a very powerful city manager, and I think [they] leveraged that power all the time. Certainly, [they] is self-aware enough to understand that [they] had a great, great influence.”

There were numerous illustrations of the initial proposer exercising power. For example, calling on the local professional baseball luminary to promote the hometown team was an exercise in legitimate power by drawing on the goodwill of the spokesperson's loyalty to the local community. In addition, by convincing prospective subcontractors to agree to exclusive contracts for services, it appeared the unsuccessful offeror was exercising inducement, even in the full and open competition period. This should not be a surprise. As one informant from the construction industry clearly stated, “people still thought [they] were going to win it.’

The committee chair had legitimate power inherent in the position, including a vote on the exclusive five-member selection panel. They was able to exercise legitimate power based on their reputation for counting votes and their experience. For those who believed they was destined to be the next mayor, they may also have had coercive power, at least that’s what an analysis of the data suggests because their peers gave them a power rating of over 3.00 at each point in time throughout the process, one of the consistently highest coercive power ratings of any of the stakeholders.

Organized labor’s aggregate power remained consistent as measured by their peers throughout the timeline, perhaps in part because of the transactional nature of their relationships with the outcome, i.e., more significant projects equaled more jobs. A clear example of induced power was exercised by organized labor’s involvement in the 2019

campaign for mayor by raising and spending legal campaign contributions for one of the candidates. Raven (1993) pointed out that stakeholders with considerable financial resources can induce power. In this case, the induced power was an ability to give or withhold financial support for political campaigns, and this fact was certainly known to every prospective mayor candidate in 2017, even if the election for mayor was two years away. Expressed clearly by one knowledgeable informant, “that's why [they] spent \$350,000 trying to beat [them] in the mayor's election.”

Indicative of the exercise of power or lack of exercise of power by the citizens group is their consistently low power ratings and that they may have missed opportunities to influence the process and the outcome. Although occurring after the timeline of this case study, other citizens groups were deeply involved in follow-on contract negotiations for subcontracting work. In addition, there were significant community outreach efforts for, among other things, minority business inclusion. Other groups besides or in addition to the citizens group in our study might have represented community voices more effectively or powerfully during the pre-solicitation stage. But the universally agreed view among informants of this research of the citizens group is that “[t]hey kind of went off on a tangent early, so lost any power they had.”

Councilmember A displayed perhaps the starkest increase in the exercise of power and the most prominent display of the exercise of power. The issues surrounding the new terminal defined them and gave them a natural platform to distinguish themselves from the mayor and the mayor's allies, particularly the committee chair, and it gave them their voice

on the council and in the community. One observation was, “I think [they] made a name for themself in the process that set up the mayoral campaign in 2019.”

If it was political opportunism, they seized on that opportunity and exercised their power of all types, sometimes to the dismay of observers; for example, they was “appealing to both sides, meaning those who were trying to kill the contract and those were trying to move it forward. On the day of the vote, both sides reported that they were counting on [councilmember A] as their vote.” They also led the charge to bring in outside experts. Ultimately, that may have been their greatest power-play because the ratings indicate that the hired legal expert wielded the highest levels of power in all categories, and in some ways, the process and outcome became a standoff between the high-power city manager in the high powered hired legal expert.

### **Summary**

Chapter Five analyzed the findings presented in Chapter Four, focusing on answers to the final two research questions regarding the implications of the exercise of social power and the impact on effectiveness or success. The analysis illustrated that as stakeholders exercised power, a clear implication was shifting in the balance of power among stakeholders; some went up, others went down; some went out on the radar chart, while others came in. The implications of hiring a legal expert cannot be understated, described by more than one stakeholder as like the metaphor of the camel’s nose under the tent. The hired legal expert recommended competition, which led to the RFP, then the disqualification of two out of four proposals, and the selection of the out-of-town successful bidder.

Councilman A was a leading proponent of hiring outside experts, including the hired legal expert. They also exerted direct power, questioning proposals and the process. Their position on whom to select might have been ambiguous or shifted, as illustrated in this comment, “then at the vote, [they] changed [their] vote, and I think they were waiting for [them] in the hall, ready to do [them] violence.” Nonetheless, their comments on the process were steadfast from almost the moment the mayor’s announcement for an airport new terminal.

The review and analysis of shifts in power, implications, and the effects, allowed for a clearer understanding of where the chips fell. But fall they did. One informant described it this way: “[u]ltimately the system worked, the political process worked, and as the community had the opportunity to really be brought into the project, so I actually think it’s a major success story for our city.”

## CHAPTER 6 IN CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to further understand stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. The pre-solicitation phase is a shaping phase, a necessary time to assess the needs and expectations of a project. Pre-solicitation establishes a framework that provides for the communication of ideas and intentions and the conditions by which a project process is executed. The case of the airport new terminal proposal presented an opportunity to better understand stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of a high-profile, high-dollar public-private partnership that transformed in just 10 weeks from the announcement of a no-bid, unsolicited proposal with private financing to a full and open competition with public financing. This chapter offers concluding thoughts. I will summarize the information presented in each chapter of the dissertation and the implications and limitations of this study. There are gaps in the literature on the subject of stakeholder salience and power in the pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnerships. I provide suggestions for further research to address the gaps and questions arising from this study, including a need for scholarship into the applicability of collaboration literature and techniques as explicitly related to public-private partnerships.

### **Discussion of the Chapters**

Chapter One introduced a history of public-private partnerships and a description of the current perspectives on them. Additionally, the airport's background helped explain the argument for a new terminal to meet updated security and customer expectations. The announcement of the airport new terminal proposal and the stakeholders on the scene were

described. Chapter Two explored the literature surrounding public-private partnerships and stakeholder salience and social power. I ultimately identified a gap in studies about stakeholder salience and power in the pre-solicitation phase and limitations or under-application of collaboration literature as relevant to public-private partnerships. Chapter Three outlined the methodological approach to the study and how the research questions were addressed through a qualitative case study leveraging the new terminal and those informants who had personal knowledge and involvement in the events in the pre-solicitation timeline. Chapter Four summarized the findings from extensive research using archival documents, informant interviews, and worksheets completed by informants. Chapter Five analyzed the data collected to help answer the research questions and understand better the significance of stakeholder salience and social power for the dynamics of the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. Finally, Chapter Six concludes the research with implications, limitations, contributions, and recommendations for further research.

### **Implications of the Study**

As public bodies explore public-private partnerships to address high-cost, high-profile and high-risk public infrastructure needs, multi-stakeholder procurement methods like public-private partnerships deserve a deeper understanding of stakeholder salience and power dynamics. This understanding of stakeholder work is consistent with the Renz and Andersson (2014) research, referencing Lee and Mitchell (2013), that synthesized stakeholder literature “according to a logic which asserts . . . five primary research streams” and arrived at a definition of “stakeholder work as the purposive processes of organizations

aimed at identifying, understanding, being aware of, prioritizing, and acting with respect to stakeholders” (p. 212). There is a benefit when public sector actors and private sector actors have methods to measure salience attributes, power ratings, and self-assessments, especially in comparison with peer assessments. An effective pre-solicitation phase is essential because projects at the early stage are highly susceptible to ambiguity, dynamic stakeholder interaction, and extraordinary levels of uncertainty (Florice & Miller, 2001; Miller & Lessard, 2000). This case suggests that taking part in stakeholder work and applying collaboration literature and techniques would aid organizers and participants to better engage in the successful pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnerships.

Two years after the events of this case, in a wrap-up article about the mayor’s time leading the city, a news outlet synopsized the airport new terminal proposal and process this way:

Most councilmembers were stunned. [The newspaper’s] editorial board went ballistic. The council hired its own legal counsel to figure out what to do. [The mayor] was forced to back down and put the contract out for bid, kicking off a mess of a process that blundered on for months (Shelly, 2019, A1).

The implications of this study can be characterized in three areas: (a) the complexity of stakeholder work when recognizing a constellation of stakeholders; (b) the appeal and attainability of a round(er) table around which stakeholders can exercise power; and (c) stakeholder theory and collaboration are key component to a successful project. These implications can help governmental entities be more mindful of ways to successfully approach stakeholder salience and social power in the pre-solicitation phase of public-

private partnership, with a hope, among other things, of avoiding a synopsis like the one above.

### Constellation of Stakeholders

The more, the merrier might be a way to approach public-private partnerships, particularly in the exploration and information gathering of the pre-solicitation phase. From a management or firm perspective, more voices may be viewed as more complicated, but participants should understand stakeholder work and the merits of recognizing the constellation of stakeholders, or multiplicity, toward achieving pre-solicitation phase success and project success.

Multiplicity arose out of stakeholder theory and recognized the complex interactions among and between stakeholders and “the degree of multiple, conflicting, complementary, or cooperative claims stakeholders make to organizations” (Neville & Menguc, 2006, p. 377). This case study showed that a deeper acknowledgment and appreciation of the complexities of a public-private partnership, and a willingness to endure any short-term challenges arising from the involvement of more stakeholders during the pre-solicitation phase, may have contributed to a more successful process and a better result. It also might have helped the informants avoid what the newspaper called a “hush-hush botchathon” (Helling, 2017, A6). As the case illustrated, events during the pre-solicitation phase contributed to lingering division, resentment, and loss of confidence in the process. Councilmember A was succinct to a reporter in 2019, shortly after their election as mayor, when they said, “Lord knows, the back and forth we’ve had during the airport saga has been the stuff of legend” (Shelly, 2019, A1-3). The legend continues.

However, being the stuff of legend is not the objective of a successful pre-solicitation. Successful pre-solicitation could be a forgettable experience as stakeholders, and the public turn their attention to the actual success of the project that was the subject of the pre-solicitation.

### Know Thyself

Self-assessment data regarding power rankings proved extremely revealing when compared with peer assessment data regarding perceived power rankings. As illustrated in Figures 5.9. and 5.10., self-assessing stakeholders almost always under rated their perception of their own power in the negative/unfavorable bases, coercion and inducement, and overrated their perception of their own power in the positive/favorable bases, competence and legitimacy. Data was limited in this research and did not apply to any specific dissertation research question, but rather the data was a byproduct of the broader data collection process. A clear understanding of self-assessments and self-perceptions may help stakeholder managers, fellow stakeholders, and individual stakeholders, better achieve the desired outcome of a pre-solicitation phase of a public private partnership and more likely lead to project accomplishment.

### The Round Table

Salience reflects a stakeholder's primacy in the relationships (Mitchell et al., 1997). The questions that led to the stakeholder typology for salience remain true today: "the question of stakeholder salience ... goes beyond the question of stakeholder identification because the dynamics inherent in each relationship involve complex considerations that are not readily explained by the stakeholder framework as it currently stands" (Mitchell et al.,

1997, p. 854). Thus, the Venn diagram they created, as shown in Figure 6.1., was applied in this case study and should be actively utilized by participants and managers of the pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnerships. When utilized, the Venn diagram will help encourage that not only managers but also stakeholder participants have a visual representation and awareness of their stake relative to others in the project and process. This awareness will add depth and relevance to the pre-solicitation phase. Where stakeholders are located on the diagram is less important initially than understanding and identifying that they are located on the diagram. Once attributes are explored and identified, classifications can be determined, and strategies for successful stakeholder engagement can be developed.

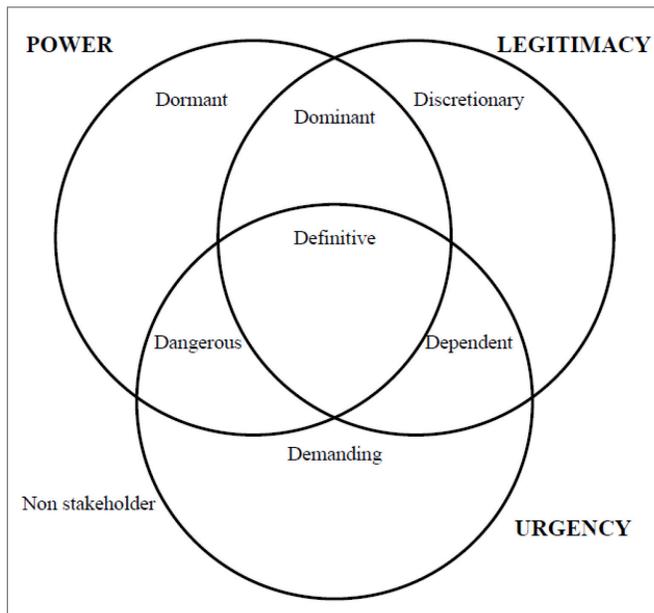


Figure 6.1. Stakeholder Typology: One, Two, or Three Attributes Present  
 Source: Mitchell et al., 1997.

As rated in the early stages of the new terminal, power showed a lopsided distribution, resembling an asymmetrical shape almost all in the direction of the mayor’s band of collaborators, as seen in Figure 6.2. from May 12, the date of the announcement.

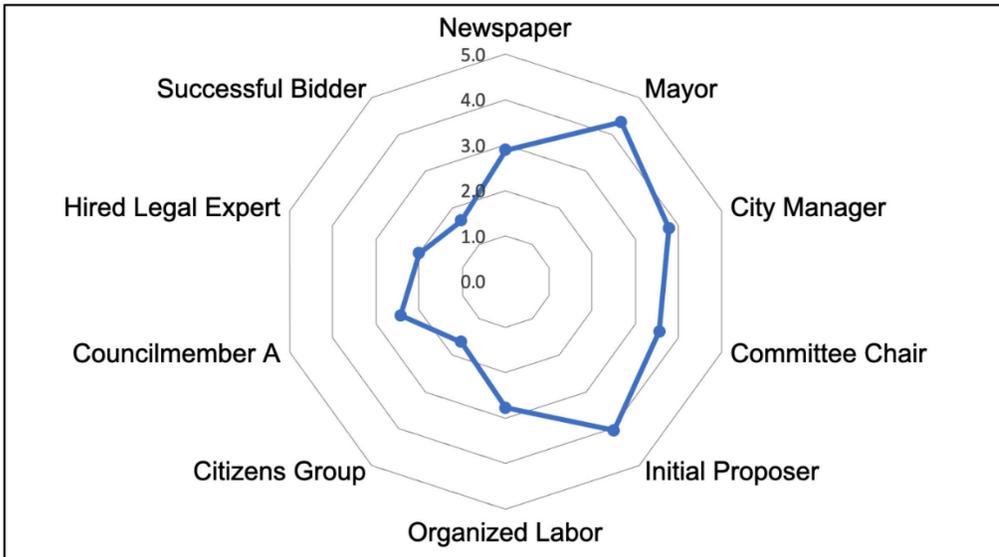


Figure 6.2. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, May 12 – The Announcement

This imbalance was rebalanced over time, as the highly salient stakeholders became more engaged and exerted power, as illustrated in Figure 6.3. from July 18, the date for submission of bids. Thus, crucial to the round table was ensuring the highly salient stakeholders were identified and participating.

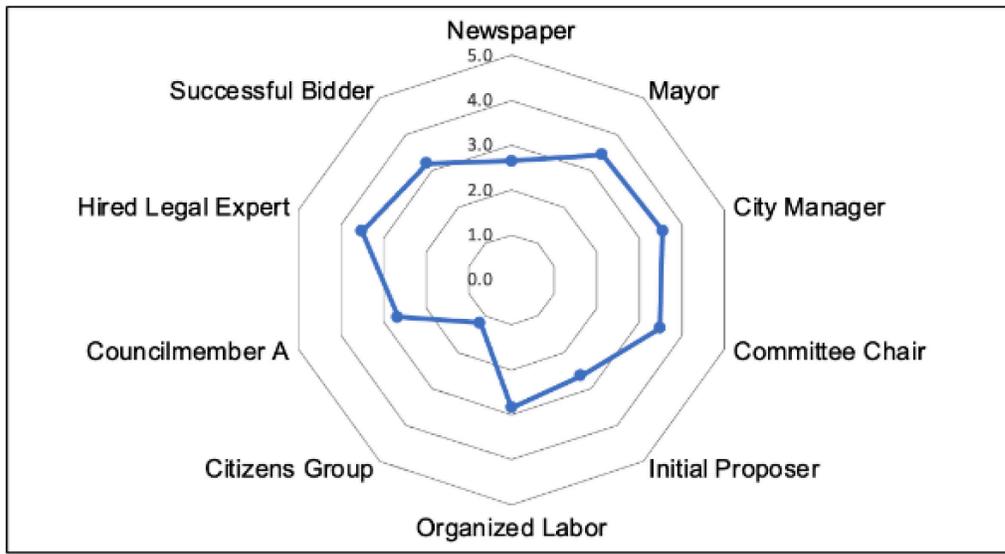


Figure 6.3. Radar Chart of Aggregate Stakeholder Power, July 18 – Submission of Bids

Understanding salience attributes and classifications may lead to an effective listing of highly salient stakeholders for whom power can be rated and plotted. An optimal objective may be a balanced, round table, thereby encouraging the kind of collaboration Wood and Gray (1991) described as “a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engaged in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures to decide on issues related to the domain” (p. 146). Figure 6.4. shows a simulation where the highly salient stakeholders have perceived power ratings that are all equal or nearly equal. A round table reflects Freeman’s (1999) proposition that stakeholder collaboration may contribute to an increased likelihood of a stable agreement through stakeholder alliances fostering cumulative power.

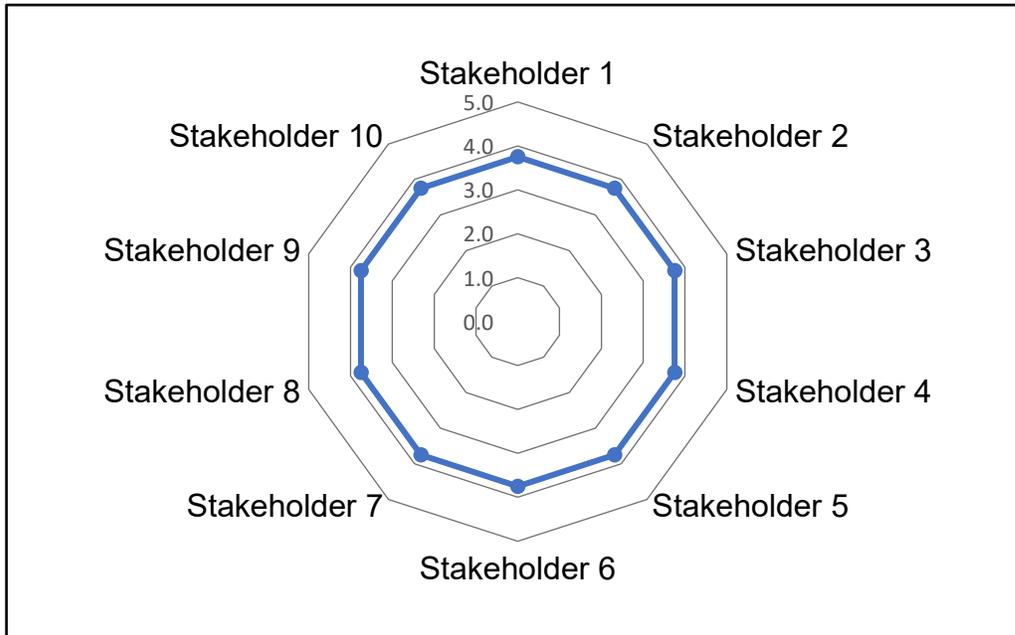


Figure 6.4. Radar Chart of Optimal Aggregate Stakeholder Power

Pfeffer and Salancik (1987) wrote about organizations coming together to secure resources critical to establishing influence, power, stability, and survival. The research, in this case, suggests that the process was successful only after there was a coming together, and as a result, a re-balance in stakeholder power. Equality of all highly salient stakeholders is not realistic. One is reminded of the sign from *Animal Farm*, which described all animals as equal, but some animals were more equal than others (Orwell, 1945). However, equality of recognition may be feasible. Stakeholder salience should be applied to understanding the dynamic nature of stakeholder attributes. Salience shifts as circumstances change.

Moreover, a recommendation is that ideally, stakeholder salience and power should be measured repeatedly to identify shifts, just as in this study there were shifts. Some stakeholders will inevitably overpower others, and some will inherently counterbalance

others in the process. Using this empirical case study to illustrate the point, the constellation of stakeholders participated and exercised power that provided balance and helped approach an optimal distribution of power, thus a round(er) table.

#### Collaboration in this Case

“Collaboration isn’t [their] thing. [They] basically comes up with an idea, puts it in front of a small group of people, and says, ‘We’re moving forward’” (Shelly, 2019, A3). This description of the mayor’s character, in this case, is not unrecognizable in other situations. I consistently refer to the mayor and their band of collaborators, i.e., the city manager, committee chair, and initial proposer. They collaborated on the unsolicited proposal by, at the very least, appearing in front of the newspaper’s editorial board together and then standing side by side to announce the proposal on May 12, 2017. Collaboration was intense, but the group was exclusive, essentially the River Club club, and the group did not contain an adequate number of stakeholders nor decision-makers to get the deal done. Exclusivity, as opposed to engagement, limited transparent decision-making and stakeholder engagement (Cascetta et al., 2015). Zidane et al. (2015) found in their research that limiting stakeholder engagement, especially during the planning or pre-solicitation phase, increased the potential for conflict in later phases. An informant in the case of the airport new terminal summed it up mathematically: “The mayor certainly did not bring with [them] the ability to create an automatic seven vote majority.”

The rest of the story is that over the next several weeks, the proposal unwound, the band of collaborators frayed, the city council convulsed and insisted on a full and open competition. Four competitors submitted bids (and the initial proposer was subsequently

disqualified). What would have happened if, early in the process, the mayor and others had opened up the process, the pre-solicitation process, to greater collaboration? We are not the only ones wondering. One highly significantly salient stakeholder pondered: “I guess I was really curious why they didn’t start with an open RFP. It just didn’t even make sense to me, but you know...” And then they trailed off with, “that was the one thing where I thought if we could have had that initial discussion....” If only.

Kanter (1994) identified that the organization in a public-private partnership is the partnership. The organization must cultivate and nurture relationships among partners and stakeholders so that managing the differences among them from the perspective of the firm would be constructive and effective. In the pre-solicitation phase in our case, during exploration, inquiry, and planning, knowing who should be involved in the process and the project would have meant casting a wide net among potential stakeholders, not having a small band of collaborators.

Bringing stakeholders together and establishing and enhancing trust fosters and strengthens the collaborative partnership (Das & Teng, 1998; Kanter, 1994). However, according to interviews, establishing and enhancing trust was not predominant in this case: “It’s easy to second-guess, but boy, the way they did it was not designed to, didn’t result in trust and credibility being built up, it resulted in just the opposite.”

Kanter (1994) wrote that a gap existed in collaboration literature regarding the significance of stakeholder relations and relationship building. A gap remains but applying recent scholarship in non-profit management and collaborative governance is relevant to public-private partnerships (Van Puyvelde et al., 2013). Theoretical perspectives continue

to evolve and become more applicable in many ways to understand public-private partnerships as more complex, multidimensional, and nuanced structures.

### Failure as a Public-Private Partnership

As one informant declared, “[u]ltimately the system worked, the political process worked, and as the community had the opportunity to really be brought into the project, so I actually think it’s a major success story for our city.” While the project may have been “a major success story for our city,” it was a failure as a public-private partnership. Data gathered in this empirical study revealed that with little or no formal pre-solicitation phase, this public-private partnership proposal failed to secure necessary stakeholder agreement. The initial proposal gave way to more robust pre-solicitation activities, that eventually led to an increase in the public role through the adoption of public financing, reflecting a traditional approach, and the exclusion of private financing. As illustrated in Figure 6.5., the initial proposal which loudly promoted the private finance component failed. The final project quietly converted to public finance and fell back into a traditional approach to procurement, and a non-public-private partnership.

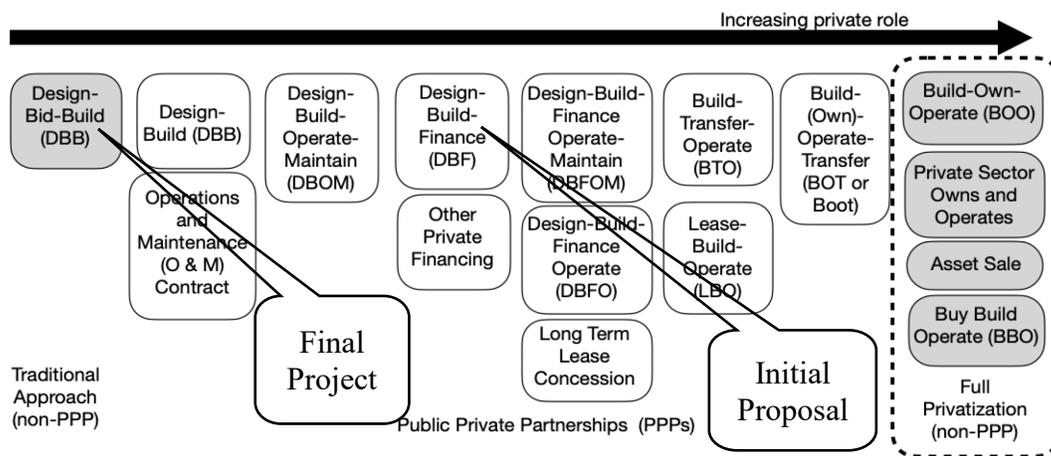


Figure 6.5. Procurement Systems Showing Project Location at the Initial Proposal and as a Final Project Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019

### **Get the Process Right So We Can Focus on the Substance**

Jill Purdy (2012) examined three arenas of power: a participation arena, a process arena, and a content arena, and applied sources of power, including authority, discursive legitimacy, and resources. A pre-solicitation phase takes in apparent aspects of the participation arena and the process arena. They observed that challenges abound when applying power because projects such as public-private partnerships are “ambiguous, complex contexts in which informants, social structures, and processes can change rapidly” (p. 410). The newspaper used the term “hopelessly bungled process” to describe the events of 2017. During the timeline of this study, perceived coercive power was rated high, in the opinion of the informants, as shown in Table 6.1. At some point in the timeline, all but two stakeholders were rated at or above 2.50 for coercive power.

Wrong’s (2017) view was that the existence and exercise of coercive power might impede the stakeholder collaborative process or inclusion. In an inherently collaborative process, the implication of a high rating for perceived coercive power should trigger alarms regarding the ability to complete a collaborative effort successfully, e.g., the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. One stakeholder with high coercive power in the early stages of the timeline shared their perspective about the process, “I happen to think that before you go tell somebody ‘Hey, we’re thinking about such and such,’ that you have something semi-concrete. Then you ask, ‘What are your thoughts?’” The sentiment was acknowledged in an observation by another stakeholder that “at the beginning of the process, the newspaper invited other people into the discussion, and once that happened, the mayor and city manager lost control in some way.”

Table 6.1. Perceived Coercive Power Rating Over Time

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>	<b>May 12</b>	<b>May 30</b>	<b>June 6</b>	<b>July 18</b>
Newspaper	2.80	3.33	3.00	3.20	2.70
Mayor	4.30	4.44	4.20	3.70	3.50
City Manager	3.70	3.44	3.40	3.00	3.10
Committee Chair	3.30	3.56	3.20	3.10	3.10
Initial Proposer	2.82	3.50	2.91	2.55	2.09
Organized Labor	2.30	2.44	2.50	2.50	2.60
Citizens Group	2.09	1.90	2.00	1.36	1.18
Councilmember A	2.09	2.50	2.64	2.64	2.45
Hired Legal Expert	1.20	1.56	2.50	2.50	2.40
Successful Bidder	1.09	1.20	1.45	2.00	2.09

Related, stakeholder interests evolve and shift, and multiple stakeholders rarely have identical objectives (Balsler & McClusky, 2005). An implication in this study is that the evolution and shifting of stakeholder interests lends itself to the benefits of a process that is explainable, predictable, and supportable; and developed and communicated in a pre-solicitation phase. The reporter’s rhetorical question illustrates the point: “Process? There’s going to be no process whatsoever now. No request for proposals. They just came out of nowhere and said, ‘We’re going to push this through in two weeks.’” Their colleague affirmed the statement: “You know, I’m convinced the newspaper would not have spent as much energy if the process had been orderly from the beginning if there wasn’t this sort of shadow over the process right out of the gate.”

### **Limitations of the Study**

One limitation of this research is that the case study selected was an individual public-private partnership proposal, and therefore, the results may not be extrapolated

widely to other public-private partnerships. In addition, the findings of this study are limited to the stakeholders who participated in this particular case. It is possible that any theory developed through inductive research is incomplete, and this study may not have universal generalizability (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). However, using a case study protocol following Yin (2018) maximized possible generalizability through an approach that has been used in respected inductive case studies by the likes of Eisenhardt (1989), Brown and Eisenhardt (1997), and Chandler (2005). Therefore, the research should continue to leverage the analytical data and be utilized to support the identification of new information related to stakeholder salience and social power dynamics.

An additional limiting factor was the pre-emptive creation of a stakeholder list based on archival documents. The benefit of a pre-emptive list is it allowed informants to rate a consistent list of stakeholders. A limitation was also the pre-emption, which may have inadvertently encouraged a hesitancy among informants that discouraged them from expanding on that list. I was able to overcome this limitation in part by asking probing questions in the interview and eliciting names of additional highly salient stakeholders; however, those additions came later, and those names were not rated for power. A remedy might be arranging multiple interactions with participants, relying on them alone and not archival documents to create a highly salient stakeholder list. This approach also faces challenges because many of the informants had limited availability, and the non-participation rate would likely be higher. Nonetheless, consistent with a theme of this chapter that the more, the merrier, methodologies to confirm or elicit more highly salient stakeholders on the list to be rated for power would benefit future studies.

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

Four distinct areas for further research emerged from this study. First: When studying public-private partnerships, a fourth salience attribute of proximity may be considered. Some scholars suggest the additional salience attribute of proximity is valid and equally important to the Mitchell et al. salience attributes of power, legitimacy, and urgency. The literature sheds light on a fourth attribute of proximity, i.e., near and far, in terms of physical distance, time, and likelihood (Driscoll & Starik, 2004). Authors Kirat & Lung (1999) classified proximity as institutional, organizational, and geographic. Research by Torre and Rallet (2005) described the attribute of proximity as geographical and organizational. Thus, proximity as an attribute relevant to stakeholder salience could be considered for further research when applied to the pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnerships.

Second: Choosing or using a local construction or development team on (large scale) public works projects benefits the public entity through an improved outcome and a better value in public-private partnerships. The initial proposer, in this case, spent significant time, effort, and reputational and financial resources in pursuit of the new terminal project. From the May 12 announcement forward, they relentlessly referred to themselves as the hometown team. One keen political observer described it this way:

[They] thought they had enough political influence with the team they had built, right? [Initial proposer] and their leadership group went out and beat the bushes, so to speak, politically to try to win that deal. They formed the hometown team thing,

tried to get as many contractors behind them as they could, those types of things, and at the end of the day, that obviously didn't work out.

Is there a measurable hometown team value proposition? It was suggested in this case that because the project leadership and project laborers would also be users of the new terminal and friends and neighbors of users, they would be more deeply and personally invested in a successful product. Presumably, they may try harder to ensure project success. It was summed up pretty clearly, “wait a minute, you're talking about our hometown team doing the work with hometown financing and hometown workers versus bringing in somebody from outside to do it and take the money out. Why is that a bad thing?” Framing research questions around if that would be a good thing, then gathering the literature and collecting data would be interesting for further research.

Third: Recent literature in the areas of collaboration and non-profit management can apply to the integration with public-private partnership research. Collaboration among and between stakeholders and managers is critical. Kanter observed that the purpose of collaboration was to “manage the relationship and not just the deal” (1994, p. 96). Bringing stakeholders together and establishing and enhancing trust would foster and strengthen the collaborative partnership (Das & Teng, 1998; Kanter, 1994). Kanter wrote in 1994 that there existed a gap in collaboration literature regarding the significance of stakeholder relations and relationship building. A gap remains but applying recent scholarship in non-profit management and collaborative governance is relevant to public-private partnerships (Van Puyvelde et al., 2013). Theoretical perspectives continue to evolve and become more applicable in many ways to understand public-private partnerships as more complex,

multi-dimensional, and nuanced structures. This suggests the need for further study into integrating theories beyond the current body of knowledge to expand our understanding of stakeholders and social power related to public-private partnerships in the pre-solicitation phase.

Fourth: Traditional notions of the manager must be expanded to accommodate the inherent broader centers of power and shifting power dynamics in multi-stakeholder endeavors such as public-private partnerships. The infamous meeting at the River Club was organized by the initial proposer who invited a select group of highly salient stakeholders. It proved to be a marker for the start of a proposal that led to a process that eventually resembled the pre-solicitation phase of a public-private partnership. Proponents praised the initial proposer for their initiative and innovation. Opponents complained that, as one attendee described it: "Oh my God. 'Back room deal at the River Club.' You know, if I ever go into the River Club again, just shoot me!"

At that meeting the initial proposer could be viewed as the stakeholder manager, as described by through a hub-as-spoke modes as described by Freeman (1984). Over the course of the spring and summer, however, the perspective of who was the hub, the manager, changed. The mayor led the presentation of the proposal to the newspaper and made the initial announcement on May 12, but data shows that the mayors perceived power declined from a high of 4.03 on May 30 and finished at 3.45 on July 18. The mayor on June 6 publicly stated that he was stepping back. The city manager's perceived power was nearly as high as the mayors on May 12, at 3.90, and remained high throughout the process, with a rating of 3.55 on July 18. The next highest rating was the hired legal expert,

with 3.50. They was absolutely influencing if not outright managing significant aspects of the pre-solicitation process.

Research indicates that in a public private partnership, highly salient stakeholders hold different perceptions regarding who is or who are the managers. As has been previously noted, successful award of the project at the conclusion of the process corresponds with data showing a more even distribution of power among highly salient stakeholders, the round table. The research suggests that the perceived or self-perceived manager(s) in a public private partnership would do well to promote data collection in order to better understand self-perception and peer-perception of power among stakeholders with an eye toward that optimal distribution.

### **Concluding Remarks**

My mother taught me the Golden Rule, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” A different Golden Rule in a political context is sometimes described as “she who has the gold, rules.” Collaboration strategies underlie the first Golden Rule. Power tactics underlie the second Golden Rule. Traditional public procurement is sometimes explained as a partnership because there are two parties, the public and the private. However, these parties are fundamentally a principal and an agent. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, a public-private partnership is a true multi-stakeholder procurement method, and the early stage is susceptible to ambiguity and uncertainty. Inherently, public-private partnerships include more stakeholders. The pre-solicitation phase is essential because projects at the early stage are highly susceptible to ambiguity, dynamic stakeholder interactions, and extraordinary levels of uncertainty (Florice & Miller, 2001; Miller and

Lessard, 2000). The takeaway findings from this empirical case study are a contribution to appreciating and identifying stakeholder salience attributes and classifications, as well as the ability to and importance of measuring stakeholder power at various stages of a pre-solicitation phase.

The world will be a better place by engaging stakeholders to actively participate in the pre-solicitation phase of public-private partnership proposals and projects. The pre-solicitation phase provides an opportunity to identify and assess stakeholder salience; acknowledge the effects of imbalances in power rating, and manage variances between self-assessments and peer-assessments among stakeholders, particularly the persistent underestimation of one's own coercive and induced power rating as compared with the perceptions peers have.

A first step is addressing the Mitchell et al. (1997) question of who and what really counts, who is salient. Next is applying and measuring types of power among the highly salient stakeholders by using peer and self-assessments.

In the case of the airport new terminal, there was a clear and measurable imbalance in power distribution at various stages in the timeline, particularly at the early stages. There was significant resentment and rivalries, as described in a quote to a news reporter, “‘I’ve never worked with anyone like [the mayor], and I hope I never have to again,’ says [councilmember B]” (Shelly, 2019, A1).

The research in this case showed the rebalance of perceived power over time that looked more like a round table when plotted on a radar chart. As the new terminal process became more full and open regarding competition, power appeared significantly more

balanced and distributed more evenly. To continue with the metaphor, highly salient stakeholders had a seat at the proverbial round table.

Significant to accurately identifying highly salient stakeholders, retrospectively and prospectively, is detailed attention to individuals and organizations who present themselves on an issue, and the identification of the behind-the-scenes actors. This is an ongoing activity, as stakeholder lists are created and refined. Measuring power ratings is achieved most effectively through the participation and cooperation of informants, including but not limited to stakeholders themselves, who have first-hand knowledge and experience with the project. Once measured, efforts to promote a balanced distribution of power can be employed to pursue an optimal distribution of power, thus a round(er) table.

Not everything is as easy as we might imagine. For example, in response to the RFP, the initial proposal was resubmitted as a bid on July 18, to much fanfare, described as “basically like a hometown team pep rally.” On September 6, 2017, six weeks after the timeline of this case study, the initial proposer, the hometown team, which had “mounted an elaborate public campaign [that] summer touting its hometown roots, was disqualified from consideration after city attorneys advised that its proposal didn’t conform to municipal bond laws” (Vockrodt, 2017c, A5). Consequently, the city council never had the opportunity to vote for or against the initial proposal. “You never see the bullet that hits you between the eyes.”

Also on September 6, 2017, the same day as the disqualification, the selection committee recommended the successful bidder for the \$1 billion project. Two months later, on election day, 76 percent of voters supported a new terminal. Some practitioners and

scholars may assert there is a right way to conduct a pre-solicitation phase in a multi-stakeholder public-private partnership. And most could agree there is a wrong way: “at the end of the day, we’re getting an airport. It’s just not the way I wanted it to happen.”

Fast forward four years, on October 1, 2021, councilmember B declared, “[t]his is a billion-dollar contract over 15 years. We better not make a mistake. I think it’s fine to trust the process, but you better verify it too” (Hardy, 2021, A1). They was not talking about the 2017 airport new terminal project. They was talking about the 2021 new airport concessions contract. The newspaper ran a story headlined, “‘Shit show’: [airport] concessions contract approved, heads to council after a dramatic meeting (Hardy, 2021, A1). Shifting sands make an unstable foundation. And sometimes, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

## APPENDIX A.

### INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

#### Invitation to Participate

Thank you! I am studying at UMKC, working toward a PhD in Public Administration. I would like your help with my dissertation by asking you a few questions in an interview and a worksheet. My focus is on identifying stakeholders and assessing the influence and power they have and how they use it. I'm doing a case study, and the case comes from the summer of 2017, with the proposal for a new terminal at KCI that was announced on May 12, 2017. To help you refresh your memory about this stage of the process, I've shared a timeline of the flow of events in the process and key events for my purposes. In addition, here is a clip of the announcement from May 12, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2zkHgRHXEU>

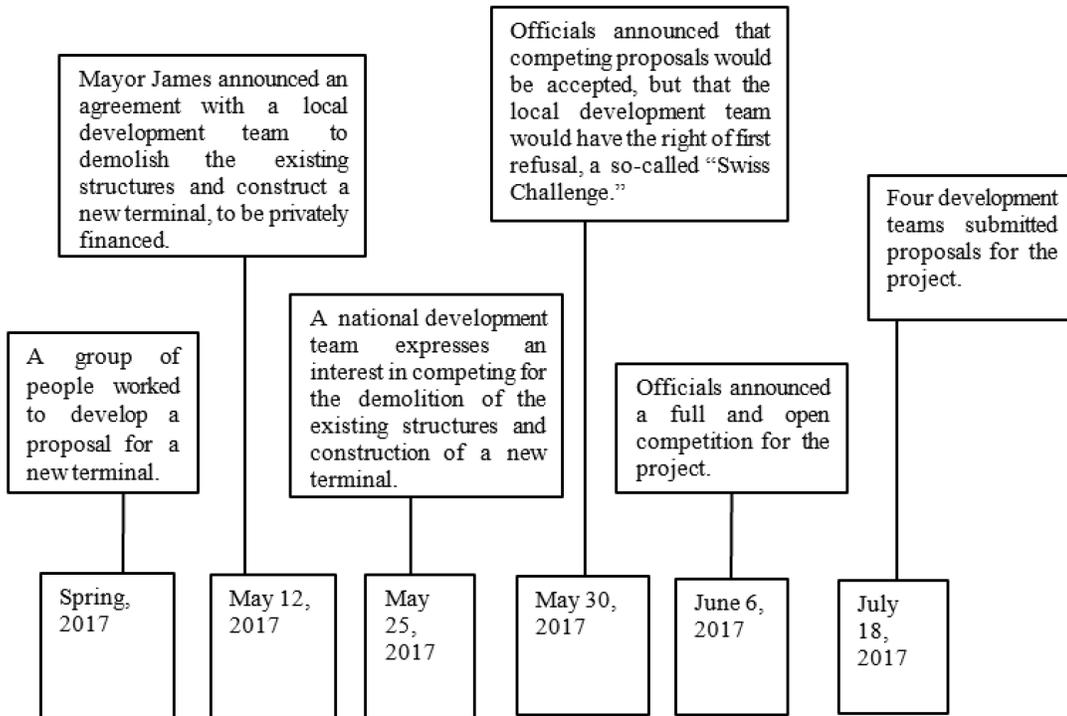
I'd like to emphasize that your participation in this project is voluntary. The interview and worksheets should take about an hour, and I may need to ask for a little of your time for a follow-up interview. If for any reason at any time you wish to end your participation, simply notify me of this - there is no need to give an explanation.

The findings and conclusions will be published in my dissertation. To help me review and analyze this information, I plan to record the interview and transcribe the recording. However, the recording and transcription are confidential. No quotes from this interview will be attributed to you without your advance permission. And if you say anything that you subsequently wish to review and revise or retract, the recorded information will be erased per your request. I would like to reassure you that the recordings and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and, at the conclusion of this project, these will be destroyed. If at any time in the interview there are any questions you would rather not answer or that you do not feel comfortable answering, please tell me and we can move on to the next question or end the interview.

Your participation in this interview process constitutes your consent. Again thanks for sharing your experiences, observations, and expertise.

**Timeline of key events:**

The focus of my research is on identifying stakeholders in public processes and assessing the power they possess and exercise. Specifically, I'm doing a case study from the spring and summer of 2017 on the proposal to build a new terminal at KCI. To help refresh your memory of this, I've created the following brief timeline of some of the key events of that summer.



## APPENDIX B.

### UMKC IRB-APPROVED CONSENT TO PARTICIPIATE IN RESEARCH



#### Consent to Participate in Research

**Study Title:**

Social power in public private partnerships: shifting sands make an unstable foundation.

**Authorized Study Personnel**

**Principal Investigator:** David Renz, Ph.D. Office: (816) 235-2342

**Secondary Investigator:** Jason Klumb Office (816) 225-3237

**KEY INFORMATION**

You are being asked to take part in this research study because you were very involved in the process related to the proposed new terminal for Kansas City International Airport. Research studies are voluntary and only include people who choose to take part. The purpose of this research is a better understanding of stakeholder identification and involvement, as well as social power and power dynamics. The total amount of time you would be in this study is roughly one hour for an interview and worksheet, with the possibility of a brief follow-up interview. During your participation you will be involved in an interview and completion of a four-page worksheet. Taking part in this research may involve the following risks or discomforts: possible risk to reputation and possible discomfort at recalling stressful or disturbing events. There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study. The benefits to science and/or society may include a better understanding of stakeholder dynamics and the exercise of social power, particularly on the front end of public private partnerships. You have the alternative of not taking part in this study.

Please read this consent form carefully and take your time making your decision. As the researcher(s) discusses this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any information you do not clearly understand. Please talk with your family and friends before you decide to take part in this research study. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

**WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?**

The purpose of this study is to help us understand stakeholder participation and relevance, as well as the power they possess and how they use that power. The case I'm studying is the proposed new terminal project at Kansas City International Airport.

You are being asked to be in this study because you have first-hand knowledge and experience with the KCI airport new terminal public private partnership proposal.

**HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?**

Approximately 20 people will take part in this study.

**WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?**

You will be asked to participate in an interview and worksheet exercise should last roughly one hour, and possibly a follow-up interview.

## Consent to Participate in Research

### HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

The interview and worksheet exercise should last roughly one hour, and possibly a follow-up interview that might take another hour.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

There are no physical risks associated with this study. There is, however, the potential risk of loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed.

Some of the questions we will ask you as part of this study may make you feel uncomfortable. You may refuse to answer any of the questions, and you may take a break at any time during the study. You may stop your participation in this study at any time.

This research may present risk if confidentiality is breached, or if emotional or psychological distress are experienced because the survey involves questions about your work participation in the process.

### ARE THERE BENEFITS TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

The benefits to science and/or society may include a better understanding of stakeholder dynamics and the exercise of social power, particularly on the front end of public private partnerships.

### WILL MY INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

*The University of Missouri System, Authorization No. 00-018 requires research data to be retained for 7 years after the final report.*

Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. Audio recordings will be transcribed and then destroyed. Pseudonyms will be assigned to help maintain confidentiality.

For paper-records, the data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for 7 years after the study is complete.

For electronic records, the data will be stored electronically through a secure server and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for 7 years after the study is complete.

The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as group or summarized data and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

### WHAT ARE THE COSTS TO YOU?

There is no cost to you to be in this research study.

### WHAT ABOUT COMPENSATION?

There is no compensation for participating in this research study.

### Consent to Participate in Research

#### **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM DURING THIS RESEARCH STUDY?**

Your well-being is a concern of every member of the research team. If you experience any difficulties as a result of being in this study, please inform Mr. Klumb or Dr. Renz as soon as possible.

#### **WHAT ABOUT MY RIGHTS TO DECLINE PARTICIPATION OR WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?**

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study ("withdraw") at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the researcher(s) or with the University of Missouri Kansas City.

You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

#### **WHOM DO I CALL IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?**

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

For study related questions, please contact the researcher(s) listed at the beginning of this form.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, or to discuss problems, concerns or suggestions related to your participation in the research, or to obtain information about research participant's rights, contact the UMKC Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office

- Phone: (816) 235-5927
- Email: [umkcirb@umkc.edu](mailto:umkcirb@umkc.edu)

#### **STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, risks and benefits have been explained to me. I have been allowed to ask questions, and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been told whom to contact if I have questions, to discuss problems, concerns, or suggestions related to the research, or to obtain information. I have read this consent form and agree to be in this study, with the understanding that I may withdraw at any time. I have been told that I will be given a copy of this consent form.

APPENDIX C.

FIVE-PAGE WORKSHEET PRESENTED TO INFORMANTS

**Worksheet**

Thank you so much for all the information you provided in this interview! Now, for the second part, I'd like to ask you to share your insights about individuals and their exercise of power through the use of a worksheet. I anticipate it will take about 15 minutes.

First, I'd like to explain more about the four primary kinds of power and influence and how I define them for the purposes of this study.

Alphabetically, they are:

Coercion, which is power to obtain compliance by the threat of force.

Competence, which is power derived from use of knowledge or skill.

Inducement, which is power gained by using economic reward.

Legitimacy, which is power one has as a result of position or a right to command.

For each of these four types of power, for each of the people we've discussed in our interview, I'd like your opinion on what level (or intensity) of each type of power each of them had at different times in the process, and how that changed over the summer. This includes you.

Across the top of each grid are the key events we discussed. On the left side are some names (and there are two spots open in case you want to add additional names). Please complete the worksheet by circling the relevant level of the specific type of power (5-HIGH and 1-LOW).

As an example, your completed worksheet may look like this:

**COERCION / COERCIVE POWER** – the power to obtain compliance by the threat of force.

	Key Event	Pre - May 12	On May 12	May 30 (Limited Competition)	June 6 (Full and Open Competition)	July 18 (submission of offers)
1	Donald Duck	5 4 <b>3</b> 2 1	5 4 <b>3</b> 2 1	5 4 3 <b>2</b> 1	5 4 3 2 <b>1</b>	5 4 3 2 <b>1</b>

12	(Additional, please write a name) Mickey Mouse	5 4 3 <b>2</b> 1	5 4 3 <b>2</b> 1	5 4 <b>3</b> 2 1	5 4 3 <b>2</b> 1	5 4 3 2 <b>1</b>
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When you finish, please notify me and I will have someone pick up the completed worksheet at the location you request.

Do you have any questions of me before you begin the worksheet?

**COERSION / COERCIVE POWER – power to obtain compliance by the threat of force.**

	Key Event- Stakeholder	Pre - May 12	On May 12	May 30 (Limited Competition)	June 6 (Full and Open Competition)	July 18 (submission of offers)
1	Citizens for Responsible Government – Dan Coffey	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
2	Greater KC AFL-CIO President – Pat “Duke” Dujakovich	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
3	KC Star Reporter / Editorial Board Member – Dave Helling	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
4	KC Mayor – Sly James	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
5	KC Council & Aviation Committee Chair - Jolie Justus	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
6	Burns & McDonnell – Ray Kowalik	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
7	KC Council – Quinton Lucas	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
8	Private Attorney / Outside Counsel to KCMO – Charles Renner	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
9	KC City Manager Troy Schulte	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
10	Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate – Geoff Stricker	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
11	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
12	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

**COMPETENCE / COMPETENT POWER** – power derived from knowledge or skill.

	Key Event- Key Stakeholder	Pre - May 12	On May 12	May 30 (Limited Competition)	June 6 (Full and Open Competition)	July 18 (submission of offers)
1	Citizens for Responsible Government – Dan Coffey	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
2	Greater KC AFL-CIO President – Pat “Duke” Dujakovich	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
3	KC Star Reporter / Editorial Board Member – Dave Helling	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
4	KC Mayor – Sly James	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
5	KC Council & Aviation Committee Chair - Jolie Justus	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
6	Burns & McDonnell – Ray Kowalik	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
7	KC Council –Quinton Lucas	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
8	Private Attorney / Outside Counsel to KCMD – Charles Renner	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
9	KC City Manager Troy Schulte	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
10	Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate – Geoff Stricker	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
11	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
12	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

**INDUCEMENT / INDUCED POWER – power by using economic reward.**

	Key Event - Key Stakeholder	Pre - May 12	On May 12	May 30 (Limited Competition)	June 6 (Full and Open Competition)	July 18 (submission of offers)
1	Citizens for Responsible Government – Dan Coffey	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
2	Greater KC AFL-CIO President – Pat “Duke” Dujakovich	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
3	KC Star Reporter / Editorial Board Member – Dave Helling	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
4	KC Mayor – Sly James	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
5	KC Council & Aviation Committee Chair - Jolie Justus	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
6	Burns & McDonnell – Ray Kowalik	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
7	KC Council –Quinton Lucas	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
8	Private Attorney / Outside Counsel to KCMO – Charles Renner	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
9	KC City Manager Troy Schulte	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
10	Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate – Geoff Stricker	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
11	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
12	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

**LEGITIMACY / LEGITIMATE POWER** – power from an acknowledged right to command.

	Key Event- Key Stakeholder	Pre - May 12	On May 12	May 30 (Limited Competition)	June 6 (Full and Open Competition)	July 18 (submission of offers)
1	Citizens for Responsible Government – Dan Coffey	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
2	Greater KC AFL-CIO President – Pat “Duke” Dujakovich	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
3	KC Star Reporter / Editorial Board Member – Dave Helling	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
4	KC Mayor – Sly James	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
5	KC Council & Aviation Committee Chair - Jolie Justus	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
6	Burns & McDonnell – Ray Kowalik	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
7	KC Council –Quinton Lucas	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
8	Private Attorney / Outside Counsel to KCMO – Charles Renner	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
9	KC City Manager Troy Schulte	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
10	Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate – Geoff Stricker	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
11	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
12	(Additional, please write a name)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

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## VITA

Jason Klumb was born on August 24, 1968, in Kansas City, Missouri. Mx. Klumb was graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from William Jewell College in 1990, with a major in Japanese Studies. They spent a year at Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka, Japan, and was granted a Diploma from that institution in 1987.

From 1993 until 1997, Mx. Klumb served as an elected member of the Missouri House of Representatives. In 1996, they was graduated with a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia; and in 1997, they was graduated with a Master of Science degree from the London School of Economics with a concentration in comparative politics.

In 2002, Mx. Klumb was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps. They transferred as a Major to the Missouri Air National Guard and is currently a Colonel, serving as the State Staff Judge Advocate at Missouri National Guard Headquarters.

Mx. Klumb practiced law in the public and private sectors, and in 2010, received a presidential appointment to serve as the Regional Administrator for the U.S. General Services Administration, a position they held until 2017. They began their doctoral study in the fall of 2017 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. After completing their doctoral program, Mx. Klumb would like to continue their work and teach in the areas of public service leadership, government acquisition, and public-private partnerships.