

TEN ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASK

P3s can negatively affect public services, local democracy and the public interest and are neither the best, nor the only option.

The following 10 questions should be considered by mayors, councillors and citizens whenever public-private partnerships are proposed for the delivery of local infrastructure projects:

1. Will there be full public consultation about the project, including the question of whether the project should be publicly or privately delivered?
2. Will elected officials be fully informed about the alternatives and be able to speak freely about the information they receive concerning development of the P3?
3. Have the full, lifetime costs of delivering the project through a P3 been calculated and compared to public alternatives delivering the same level and quality of service, and will the detailed information and calculations be made public?
4. To what extent does the financial viability of the P3 proposal rely on cost savings through risk transfer to the private sector, and if so, was the analysis objective and will it be made available to the public?
5. Could any promised risk transfer instead be delivered through a public procurement process that involved a fixed price contract?
6. Will the municipality be responsible for guaranteeing the private sector's profits? Who will be liable for cost overruns, or project deficiencies?
7. Does the municipality have the capacity and resources to properly evaluate, administer and monitor a contract of the length, scale and complexity of the P3?
8. Does the P3 permit the municipality the flexibility to make future changes in service delivery or other public policy decisions, to end the P3 in the procurement stage, and to terminate the contract if it is not meeting the public interest?
9. Are the private consultants involved in the project truly impartial or are they affiliated to organizations or businesses that have profited from or have an interest in the delivery of P3s? For example: the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships or P3 bidders.
10. What impact will the P3 have on the local economy and on workers' jobs, pay and benefits?