COMMUNITY

Image source (this page): Dover Kohl and Associates.

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COMMUNITY

People are the very fabric of a community and are often what give the built environment its uniqueness and character—through those who developed it, by those who use it, or both. A community is dynamic. Because it is ever-changing, an important role of government is to check in with citizens regularly and in meaningful ways to understand how the people in a community are changing. This is critical when charting its course into the future, and making it more sustainable.

Municipalities with a strong sense of community and cohesion tend to develop clear visions for future courses of action, readily partner across neighborhoods and sectors, frequently engage citizens to address common issues, and resolve disputes by helping individuals find common ground and peaceful solutions. They do this by engaging their populations and seeking out the input from those who are historically under-represented: elderly, impoverished, youth, disabled/handicapped, Native Americans and other minority populations, displaced individuals, single-parent households or immigrants.

Social equity in civic engagement practices is an effort to ensure equitable input on distribution of public services and fair implementation of public policies across populations. The National Academy of Public administration defines social equity as "*the fair, just, and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy*." The Michigan Association of Planning advocates that social equity should "*create conditions that allow individuals and communities to reach their full potential*." A community that engages its populations regularly and effectively and implements plans that create equity for all of its citizens, is a strong community. When we plan for (and implement those plans) populations but for everyone as well.

under-served populations, conditions improve for not only those target populations but for everyone as well.

This chapter focuses on a wide variety of techniques to engage citizens in meaningful ways as neighborhoods and communities contemplate making changes to the built environment, the way that services are provided, or how public facilities could be affected to present new opportunities. The graphic on the opposite page shows how the concepts and principles presented in this chapter relate to one another.

Even though public hearings are mandated as part of zoning processes, effective public engagement is recognized as a critical element of all facets of planning. But civic engagement isn't easy, and reaching apathetic populations is challenging. Ensuring that a community's vulnerable populations are represented in planning processes and decisions is absolutely crucial and even more difficult. However, we are at an exciting time due to changes in technology. There has never been a more creative time as new ways to engage populations emerge and evolve. There is also a heightened sense of awareness around issues related to equity making the techniques in this chapter all the more relevant.

COMMUNITY

Graphic source: Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University.

GLOSSARY

Civic Engagement – *"*The process of continually involving stakeholders in two-way dialogue about shared values or common issues at stake. Civic engagement strengthens decision making and requires transparency and mutual trust. (Detroit Strategic Framework Plan. 2012. Detroit Future City.) The term is often used interchangeably with public participation. However, if civic engagement is what a community does to reach out to the public; then public participation is the stakeholders' response to civic engagement. Civic engagement may also be thought of more broadly than public participation.

Public Participation – The process by which a community involves stakeholders in making a decision. It often provides processes for resolving conflicts. *It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision*" (International Association for Public Participation. http://www.iap2.org/).

Social Equity – The process by which resources and community assets and systems (political, education, natural, etc.) are distributed evenly and fairly throughout a community. Social equity creates opportunities and access for all members of a community to engage in public processes.
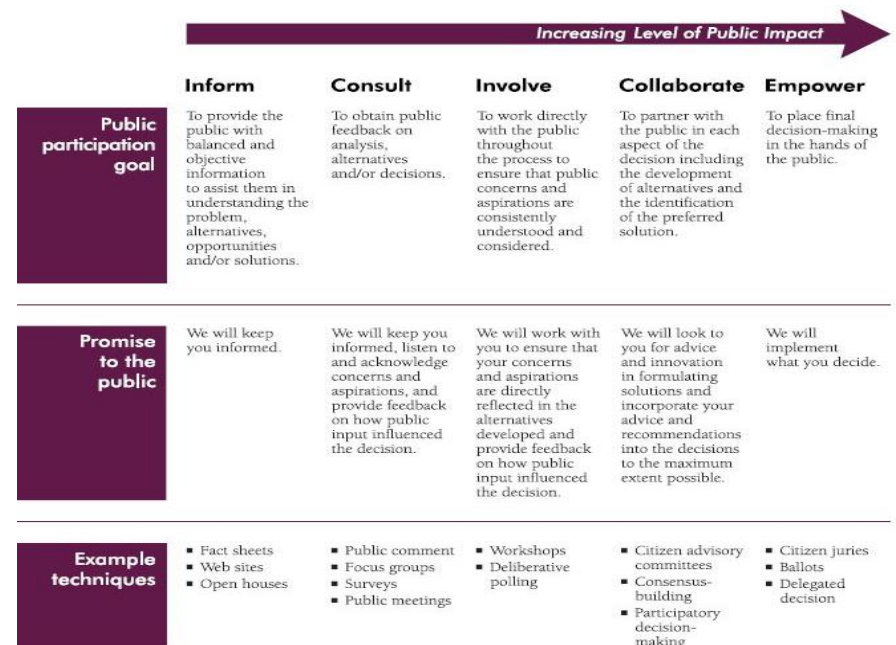
A part of democratic processes since Greek times, but championed by people like Jane Jacobs in the 1950s and 60s, civic engagement is now vital to planning processes and many municipal projects. Jacobs believed that citizens should have a voice in the decisions that shaped their communities and sought to empower them through grassroots engagement in urban planning processes and projects. Civic engagement is now a staple, best practice in planning.

Engaging the public helps hold government accountable; it shows citizens what government is doing, why, and how. This transparency and accountability often leads to opportunities for citizen education and information exchange, paving the way for smoother, future interactions. When done effectively, civic engagement ensures that plans are representative of the entire community and provides for a more complete picture of the community. Because of this, decision makers are offered the opportunity to make better, more informed decisions, and fewer "surprises" pop up throughout a process or project. By opening up planning processes to the public broadly and intentionally, ideas and hopes can be gathered and incorporated and any issues or concerns that are raised can be addressed. When civic engagement techniques are employed regularly, it also develops the community and governmental capacities to manage increasingly complex issues in a positive way. Most importantly, effective engagement techniques result in broad support for plans and projects, and leads to new partnerships for plan or project implementation.

Broad citizen and stakeholder participation in planning, project development, and project review is absolutely essential. While there are minimum standards for public notice and input required by law, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has identified a spectrum of engagement based upon goals and expectations from the public and matched those with a range of techniques. This spectrum recognizes that there are varying levels of participation that are needed from the public depending on the type of plan or project. The techniques that follow provide a variety of methods on the spectrum, from the more traditional (surveys) to the more innovative (games).

			Increasing Level of Public Impact →		
	Inform	**Consult**	**Involve**	**Collaborate**	**Empower**
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example techniques	▪ Fact sheets ▪ Web sites ▪ Open houses	▪ Public comment ▪ Focus groups ▪ Surveys ▪ Public meetings	▪ Workshops ▪ Deliberative polling	▪ Citizen advisory committees ▪ Consensus-building ▪ Participatory decision-making	▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decision

Graphic source: International Association for Public Participation.

On the facing page is an illustration depicting some of the concepts that are associated with civic engagement.

Image source (opposite page): Dover Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced by permission.
Overlay illustration by Na Li, Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University.

Ideas

Dialogue

Opportunity

Dreams

Concerns+Issues

Equity

Design
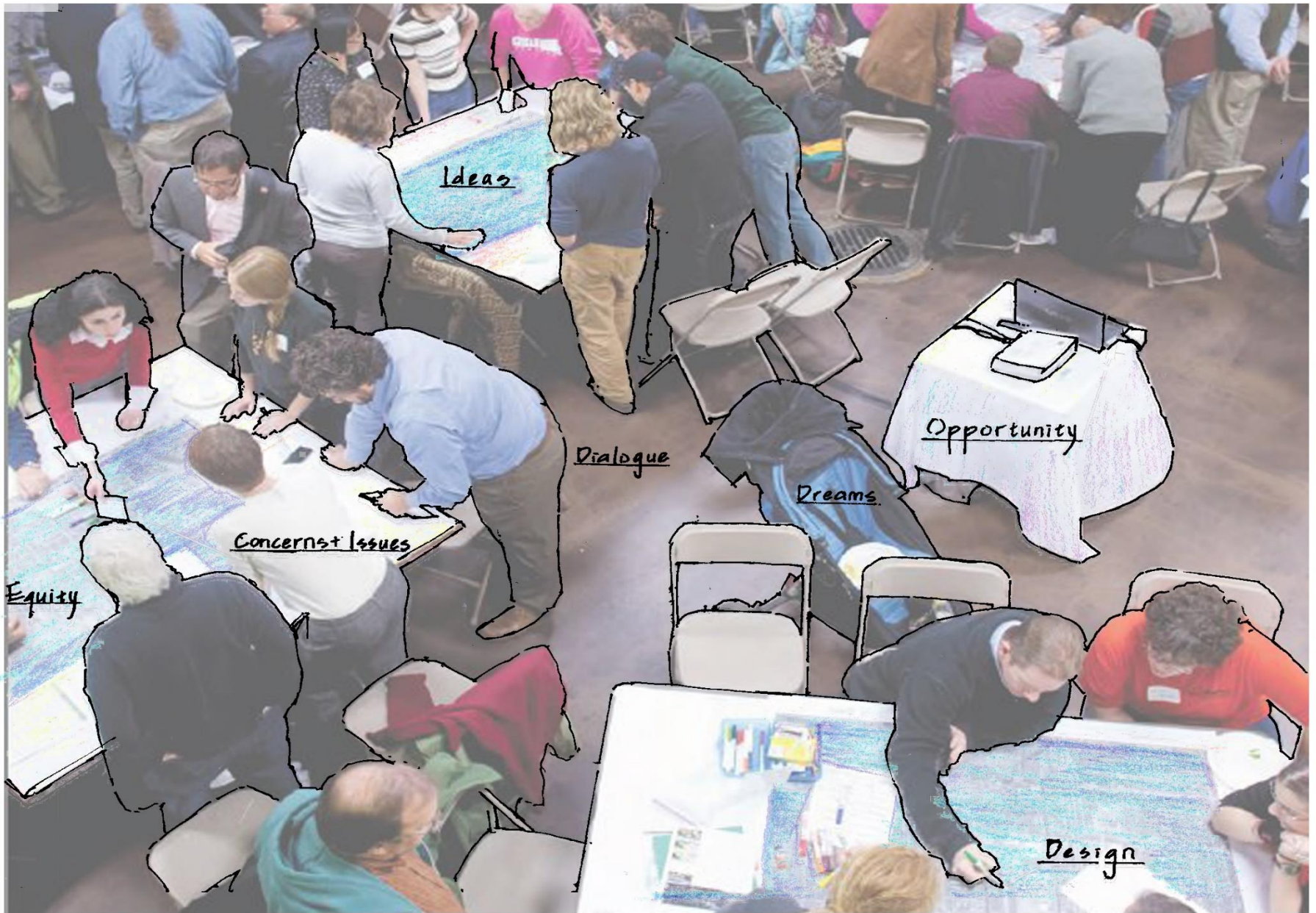
Public Participation Plan

Public and stakeholder engagement needs to be carefully considered and deliberately executed. One way to do this is by preparation of a Public Participation Plan. Most large public planning projects, and many large public infrastructure projects, have utilized them for years, sometimes hiring public relations professionals to guide the process.

The information in the following section is reproduced from the RRC Best Practices with permission. *"A public participation plan (P³) is essential for outlining how the public will be engaged throughout the planning and development process. The plan allows for interactions to share and receive information in ways that are adjusted in content and intensity to the size and scope of the project at hand. In addition, the P³ acts as a tool for accountability and transparency, requiring a municipality to often seek public input as well as record and share the results of the various methods. Furthermore, the public participation plan conserves resources in the long-run by evaluating the most valuable ways to engage the public."* (MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities®.)

Public participation, when properly executed, builds community consensus, strengthens sense of place, and builds support for implementation. Creating a culture of collaborative visioning enriches democracy by allowing citizens to voice their ideas, not just their complaints. A community's public participation plan is not another document to be created and shelved, but a daily guide for how to best incorporate the public into decisions that affect their space. Both elected/appointed officials and municipal staff should participate in the creation and application of the P³. The result will be development that the whole community has planned for, smoother approval processes, and a more satisfied public.

Public Participation Checklist

√ All meeting are open to the public and opportunities are provided for public comment following the Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts.	√ Interested individuals or organizations are offered meeting notices, agendas and materials in advance of the meeting.
√ Mail lists are maintained to distribute meeting information accordingly and so interested groups may be identified and tracked.	√ Meeting notices and schedules are posted on the TCRPC website, mailed and distributed via email.
√ Meeting notices are posted provided to the media to encourage public participation.	√ Legal notices or other public notices are published and posted in advance to offer opportunities for public participation.
√ Public meetings are held at convenient times and locations and are accessible by multiple modes of transportation.	√ TCRPC maintains an online calendar of meeting schedules and key public involvement activities to notify and encourage public participation.
√ TCRPC maintains accuracy of the agency's database of contacts to permit notifying all stakeholders and interested parties of meeting opportunities.	√ Opportunities are available for the public to participate by email, written comments, votes, dialogue, survey or feedback forms, or other techniques.
√ Meeting minutes, summaries and reports are maintained and made available to the public.	√ Responses to public input or comments are prepared and documented in a timely manner.

Members of the public and interested stakeholders participate in a visioning session in Flint as part of an environmental planning process. This would be one component of a broader public participation plan.

Source: Mark Wyckoff, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

The Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management prepared a Public Participation Plan for the communities within the Greater Lansing Region to comply with Phase II Storm Water National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit requirements and to assist with the watershed management planning process.

Source: Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management.

A portion of the public participation checklist developed by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's Public Participation Plan. The full plan is available at http://www.tri-co.org/Commission/Public_Participation_Plan_12-17-13.pdf.

Source: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RESOURCES

1) Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management Public Participation Plan. https://www.lansingmi.gov/media/view/GLRC_2009_Public_Participation_Plan/2326

2) Public Participation Plan Guide. Redevelopment Ready Communities® Program. MEDC. http://www.michiganbusiness.org/cm/Files/Redevelopment_Ready_Communities/PPP-guide.pdf

3) *The Bigger Picture East Lansing: Comprehensive Planning for the Future*. 2014. City of East Lansing. http://mi-eastlansing.civicplus.com/659/Comprehensive-Plan

Citizens as Leaders

Engaging a group of citizens to become active participants in a planning process is valuable and increasingly used, especially for large or complex processes or projects. By empowering citizens to take lead roles in shaping their community, citizens as leaders allows a broader reach into the community than can typically be done by staff alone.

One form of citizen leader is the Ambassador. Ambassadors are a group of engaged volunteers who go out into the community and talk to people about the project at hand. Their role is to expand the reach of information in the community simply by talking to other community members. It is a good idea to require a training session for Ambassadors to equip them with the knowledge and information to speak accurately about the project.

Another form of active engagement is the Steering Committee, also known as an Advisory Group or Task Force. These groups are usually made up of not more than 20 community leaders that are selected or appointed. Often they represent a diverse cross-section of the community and are brought to the project to oversee and govern its direction. They also may provide more detailed feedback than what is expected of the public. They too, can act as Ambassadors.

Another group is the Process Leaders. The Process Leaders are charged with guiding the civic engagement team and its processes. Again, this group is diverse and respected among the community, but they also share a passion for civic engagement processes. They may be responsible for development and implementation of a Public Participation Plan (see p. 4-5) and can act as Ambassadors.

The [Detroit Works](#) process utilized Ambassadors, a group of engaged volunteers, to talk with people in the community and disseminate information about the Detroit Works Long Term Plan. After receiving training, Ambassadors were equipped to speak about the project, pass on information, and help with other civic engagement tactics.

Source: Detroit Works Project, a part of the Detroit Future City Planning Project.

The City of East Lansing is using six Committees to guide elements and engagement of their new Master Plan. Other communities may use only one representative committee to guide overall plan development. Members often also act as Ambassadors.

Source: City of East Lansing. http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/comprehensiveplan.

The Detroit Works process also used Process Leaders to oversee the Civic Engagement component of the Detroit Works process/plan. They were selected because they were trusted members of the community, represented a diverse range of people, and were committed to the future of Detroit.

Source: Detroit Works Project, a part of the Detroit Future City Planning Project.

Human Dignity, Community Education and Civic Participation Steering Committee - focuses on policies that advance and achieve social equity and healthy lifestyles among residents of all ages, income and cultures and policies which improve access to information and knowledge about issues affecting the community. Learn more.

Economic Sustainability Steering Committee – focuses on policies that protect and improve the economic conditions of the city by encouraging community growth in a way that can be sustained for many years into the future. Learn more.

Housing Steering Committee– focuses on policies that ensure safe and affordable housing opportunities for persons of all ages, incomes and cultures, and policies which identify the appropriate housing densities where redevelopment opportunities border existing housing stock and commercial structures. Learn more.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability Steering Committee – focuses on policies that recognize the communities motorized and non-motorized transportation needs relative to land use patterns, the physical structures that are needed for the city to function, and the long term effects of development on the environment. Learn more.

Urban Form Steering Committee – focuses on policies that consider the physical shape and structure of the city as it is formed by buildings, streets, land uses, art and aesthetic choices made by past and present residents to formulate how the urban fabric is configured in the future. Learn more.

Outreach and Communication Committee – focuses on developing methods of reaching as many residents as possible to participate in the comprehensive planning process and evaluating their effectiveness as the City proceeds though the public input process in order to modify the methods as needed. Learn more.

RESOURCES

1) How Do We Get There? – Community Involvement. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. http://www.epa.gov/greenkit/community4.htm
2) *Developing Effective Citizen Engagement: A How-To Guide for Community Leaders.* April 2008. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania. http://www.rural.palegislature.us/effective_citizen_engagement.pdf

Charrette

Charrettes are multi-day, collaborative, planning and design sessions that involve design and planning professionals as well as members of the community. Charrettes are a chance for an entire community to come together to tackle a specific planning problem in their area. A charrette following National Charrette Institute (NCI) protocol harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a feasible plan that represents transformative community change. A NCI charrette is:

- At least three to five consecutive days, allowing three design feedback loops,
- An open process that includes all interested parties, and
- Focused on producing a feasible plan with minimal rework.

A charrette can be used in a variety of settings including sustainable community and building design, regional and comprehensive planning, master planning, transportation/infrastructure planning, code/policy writing, and development projects. Compared to conventional planning processes, the NCI Charrette System™:

- Saves time and money through reduced rework via short design feedback loops, time-compressed work sessions, and creation of broad support from community members, professionals and staff.
- Increases probability for implementation through an integrated team design process, early focus on engineering and finance, and bringing all decision makers together for a compressed period of time.
- Promotes trust between citizens and government through meaningful public involvement and education in which input may affect the outcome, the building of long-term community goodwill, and broad stakeholder involvement – no one takes over.
- Results in the best sustainable design by integrating all viewpoints throughout design; uninterrupted, focused team design sessions; and design based on shared guiding principles.

Source: National Charrette Institute. http://www.charretteinstitute.org/.

Michigan Ave / Grand River Ave Charrette #2
TEAM SCHEDULE (as of 10/15/13)

This is the schedule for the second charrette that was conducted on the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor in the Lansing area in 2014. Notice that there are workshops, open houses, stakeholder technical meetings (focus groups), and presentations throughout this eight day process. Work that is accomplished across several months of a traditional planning process is condensed into an intense, but focused timeframe during a charrette.

Source: National Charrette Institute, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

An essential element of any charrette is the "final" presentation where all the work that was created is presented to the public for public comment and additional input.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

This photo is from an open house at a charrette in Bay City. The open house is an opportunity for stakeholders to informally review and offer input on designs that have been created in a charrette process, usually halfway through.

Source: Land Information Access Association.

RESOURCES

1) National Charrette Institute. http://www.charretteinstitute.org/
2) Michigan Abenue/Grand River Avenue Charrettes. Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability. http://migrand-charrette.com/
3) PlacePlans. Michigan Municipal League. http://placemaking.mml.org/place-plans/
4) The Charrette. University of Delaware Complete Communities Project Site. http://completecommunitiesde.org/public-engagement/charrette/

Community Gatherings

Bringing the community together to explore ideas, hopes, issues, concerns, and solutions is a valuable and worthwhile engagement activity. Many processes, planning and otherwise, begin with some kind of Community Gathering. Some of these forms are Community Conversations, Public Forums, and Town Hall Meetings. Often other tools (see Asset Mapping p. 4-15, Visioning p. 4-13, Keypad Polling p. 4-25) are used to collect input at these gatherings.

The Community Conversation or Forum, sometimes called a Public Forum, offers a starting place for community members to talk about things that are important to them. Once community members have gathered, they participate in open, but likely facilitated, dialogue in small table groups. They also may brainstorm solutions to issues raised. There is also time at the end of the session for the small groups to report out their "findings" and for some collective, large group dialogue. These are typically used at the beginning of a planning process and are more general in nature.

The Town Hall is similar to a Community Conversation, but is likely on a narrower topic. There also may be presentations that present information for participants to consider during their small table group dialogue. Other forms of Community Gatherings are the Town Hall and Listening Sessions. Town Halls may be in person, via telephone, or virtual (see Social Media p. 4-23).

Stakeholders in Bay City participate in a Community Conservation that kicked off a planning process. Community Conservations often employ a variety of engagement techniques within them and here, participants will use asset mapping. Community Conversations are often deployed at the beginning of a planning or project process.

Source: Holly Madill, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

While this is a traditional town hall agenda on education, Twitter Town Halls are also possible.

Source: City of Portland.

A Telephone Town Hall was used to reach citizens in their homes to provide information about the Detroit Works Long Term Plan. Approximately 20,000 phone numbers were called, inviting people to join a discussion about the Plan. Once part of the conversation, listeners asked questions, answered survey questions, and listened to learn. This tactic reached out to people who would not be able to come to a meeting and/or who may not have internet access.

Source: Detroit Works Project, a part of the Detroit Future City Planning Project.

Community Town Hall Agenda

12:30-1:00	30 min	Guest Check in and Community Tables
		START OF TOWN HALL PROGRAM
12:55-1:00	5min	VIDEO: Youth Voices
1:00-1:10	10min	WELCOME: Parkrose Principal/Mayor/County Chair
		▪ Welcome the group
		▪ Thank sponsors
		▪ Review today's agenda
1:10-1:25	15min	INTRODUCTION: Mayor/Facilitator gathers initial comments, issues and questions: Introduce them to the electronic polling process and make sure the key pads are working; Initial polling questions to orient attendees
1:25:1:35	10 min	VIDEO: Vision/Values/Challenges
1:35-1:45	10 min	PRESENTATION: EcoNW/ PSF Report
1:45-1:55	10 min	*TABLE DISCUSSION & POLL QUESTIONS*
1:55-2:25	30 min	SPEAKER
2:25-2:30	5 min	*TABLE DISCUSSION & POLL QUESTIONS*
2:30-2:40	10 min	Education Cabinet/Strategies discussion: Topics to reflect Leadership Summit?
2:40-2:55	15 min	*TABLE DISCUSSION & POLL QUESTIONS*
2:55-3:00	5 min	Wrap-Up and Next Steps
		END OF TOWN HALL PROGRAM
3:00-3:30	30 min	Complete Comment Cards/Visit Community Tables

RESOURCES

1) Community Conversations. Public Agenda. http://www.publicagenda.org/pages/community-conversations
2) A Guide for Hosting Community Conversations. BC Healthy Communities. http://bankofideas.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Hosting-Community-Conversations-BC-Healthy-Communities.pdf
3) "Section 3. Conducting Public Forums and Listening Sessions." *Community Assessment.* Community Tool Box. http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conduct-public-forums/main

Visioning

Visioning is a community engagement process that helps citizens to articulate or define the future they want for their neighborhood, corridor, or community. Visioning is often completed in conjunction with a long-term master planning process but may also be used with a short-term focus.

Community visioning can be used in a wide range of ways. "*Components of a vision may include goals for population growth and development; targeted land uses in different parts of a community; ways to attract diversity; differentiation of wanted and unwanted growth and development; and new ideas for community services, institutions, or identity.*"

The visioning process varies significantly, "*but a typical process would include public announcements to initiate the opportunity, a committee to design and run the visioning process, a series of meetings or surveys to gain feedback from the community, drafting of a vision statement or plan, review of the plan by the community, and multiple stages of revision, further review, and discussions about how to proceed. Stages may be facilitated by professional consultants, and the process may include*" other events or participatory tools.

"The Oregon Model" builds a visioning process around five key questions/steps:

1. *"Where are we now? (assessment, values);*
2. *Where are we going? (trends analysis);*
3. *Where do we want to be? (visioning);*
4. *How do we get there? (action planning); and*
5. *Are we getting there? (measuring progress – post-visioning and implementation)"* ([Orton Family Foundation Planning Tool Exchange](.).).

Participants at a charrette workshop express their vision for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor in the Lansing area by mapping and drawing their ideas. Visioning exercises typically kick-off a charrette and many planning processes like Master Plan updates.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

This is a brainstorming product from a charrette workshop where participants expressed their initial ideas for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor in the Lansing area. Notice they used words and drawings.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

As a part of their Visioning process, stakeholders in Bay City participate in a workshop that utilizes Asset Mapping (see p. 4-15) to help them define their vision. Here, one group reports their findings. Reporting findings is an important and necessary component for keeping everyone informed of small group discussions.

Source: Holly Madill, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

RESOURCES

1) *Building Our Future: A Guide to Community Visioning*. Gary Green, Anna Heines, Stephen Halebsky. http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3708.pdf
2) Community Visioning. Sustainable Communities Online. http://www.sustainable.org/creating-community/community-visioning
3) Creating a Community Vision. MRSC Local Government Success. http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/governance/comvision.aspx
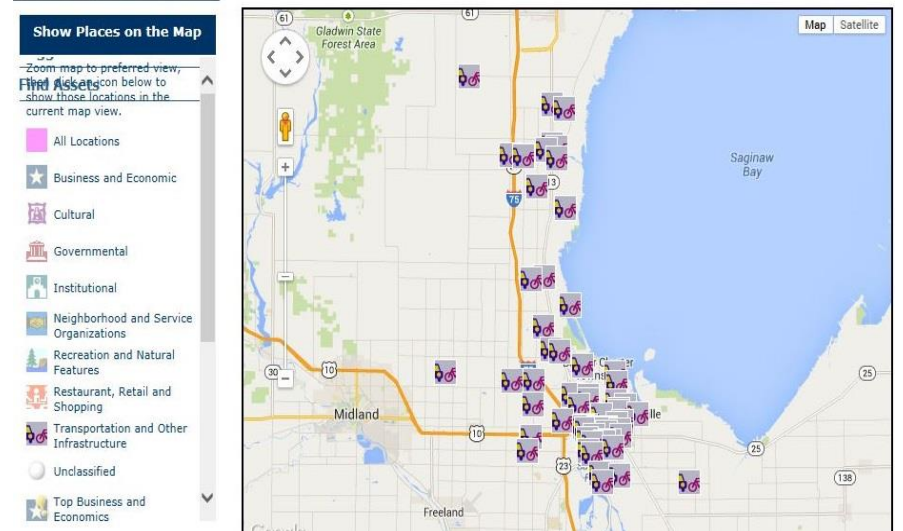
Asset Mapping

"Asset Mapping starts from a positive perspective, viewing a community as a place with assets to be enhanced, not deficits to be remedied. Assets may be persons, physical structures, natural resources, institutions, businesses, or organizations. The asset-based community development process involves the community in making an inventory of assets and capacity, building relationships, developing a vision of the future, and leveraging internal and external resources to support actions to achieve it" (Orton Family Foundation Planning Tool Exchange.).

Physical asset mapping involves identification of a particular asset like a school, park, major employer, train station, viewshed, or cultural icon like a statue and marking its location on a map. Another type of asset mapping involves inventorying the capabilities of individuals, civic associations, and local institutions. It involves documenting the tangible and intangible resources of a community. A third type of asset mapping is the use of a natural features inventory, which is a process of collecting, analyzing, and communicating information about natural systems to inform decisions. All of these processes can take many forms, but asset mapping a positive way of identifying both strengths and gaps, as well as identifying a plan for moving forward.

Asset Mapping can be captured through facilitated dialogue sessions and as part of workshops or electronically through crowd-source technologies. Assets can be represented as simple text lists or represented by symbols on a map.

Low technology methods of Asset Mapping include making lists of community assets on a flipchart or identifying them on a map as this man does in Coldwater. Asset Mapping can be a positive data-gathering activity at the beginning of many planning and/or strategic processes.

Source: Holly Madill, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

The City of Flint conducted community wide Asset Mapping exercises for its Master Plan and then paired them with challenges in its Community Profile section.

Source: Imagine Flint: Master Plan for a Sustainable Flint. 2013. City of Flint.

The Above PAR Project in Bay City utilized a website for its Asset Mapping that kicked off the planning process. This website is populated through a blend of purchased data and crowd-sourced data. Project managers provided training to community members on how to add assets, which are represented through symbols on the map.

Source: Land Information Access Association.

Challenges

Housing Diversity
- 43% renters, but only 23% multi-family housing.

Housing Stock
- 82% of Flint's housing stock was built before 1970.
- 14.1% of Flint's parcels contain houses in poor or substandard condition.

Vacancy
- 22% of Flint's residential parcels are vacant lots.
- There are 5,774 blighted parcels in Flint. It costs an average of $10,000 to demolish one house structure.

Assets

Strong Neighborhoods
- Flint contains many strong and active neighborhoods, with as many as 65 neighborhood organizations identified by the City and 14 having developed neighborhood plans.
- A variety of housing styles exist, with 24% of homes dating prior to 1940.
- As of June 2013, the Genesee County Land Bank owns over 8,335 properties within Flint, positioning a large number of problamatic lots together for system wide solutions.
- More than $35 million has been invested in Flint neighborhoods through the Neighborhood Stabalization Program since 2009.

RESOURCES

1) Asset-Based Community Development Institute. http://www.abcdinstitute.org/
2) *Asset Mapping: A Handbook*. Tony Fuller, Denyse Guy, Carolyn Pietsch. http://www.planningtoolexchange.org/sites/default/files/sources/asset_mapping_handbook.pdf
3) "Section 8. Identifying Community Assets and Resources." *Community Assessment.* Community Tool Box. http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/identify-community-assets/main

Surveys and Interviews

Surveys are questionnaires that participants either fill out themselves or are asked through a scripted interview where the interviewer records their responses. Participants select responses from a list of predetermined answers or are allowed to offer their own responses to open-ended questions. Surveys work best when they are targeted for a specific purpose and to a specific audience.

Surveys can be used to find out attitudes and reactions, measure client satisfaction, or gauge opinions about various issues. They can be used to find statistically valid information about a large number of people even when only a small number of people respond to the survey. In addition, surveys also have the potential to increase the likelihood of engagement in planning projects among community members who participate.

Surveys can be used at the start of a project to create a baseline of information, throughout to test opinions of alternatives and provide guidance on direction, and/or at the end to evaluate effectiveness and success. They can be done in paper or online, or in person or on the phone, also known as interviews. Online surveys can be a relatively low-cost method of sampling a population. Personal interviews provide more opportunity for free-flowing dialogue along with a healthy guarantee of participation from the interviewee.

Surveys are good techniques to gather opinions, community preferences, and preliminary information on a subject, or to explore a certain topic more intensely. There are other data collection methods for building on the information gathered from surveys.

Corridor Design Portfolio
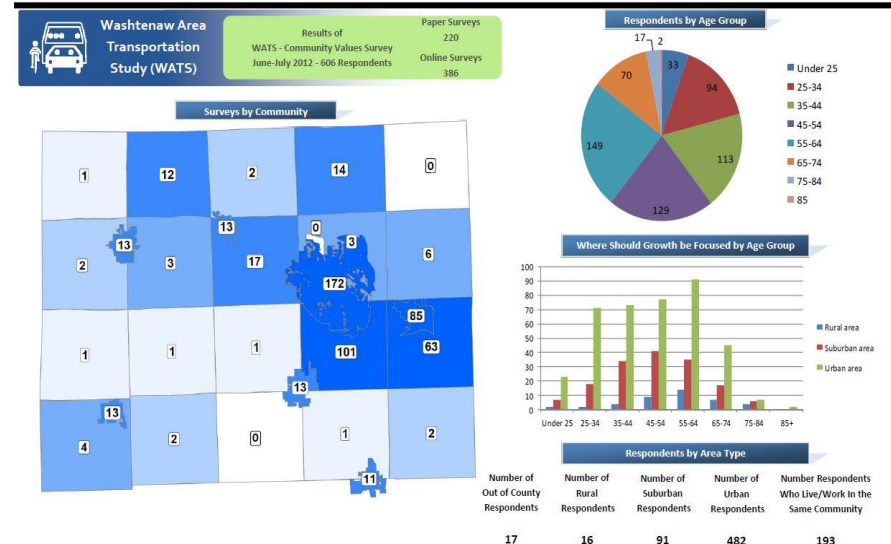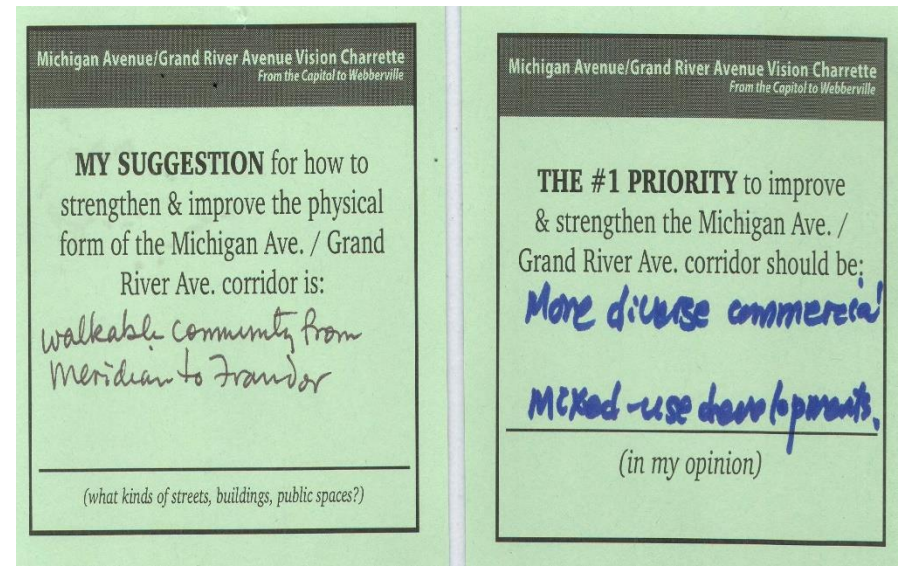
These input cards were used during a hands-on design workshop to gather input about suggestions and priorities for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue Corridor in the Lansing area.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

The research team that conducted an affordable housing study for the Tri-County region used interviews with housing experts to obtain practical opinions on housing affordability in the region. This flowchart shows how the interviews furthered knowledge and study goals relative to other activities.

Source: Regional Affordable Housing Study. Suk-Kyung Kim, Michigan State University, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

The Washtenaw Area Transportation Study conducted a community values survey for input into their 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan. They used both paper and online formats. These images were created from the survey results for the report in the plan.

Source: Washtenaw Area Transportation Study.

July 2012:
Establishing Housing Task Force

August 21, 2012
Housing Task Force Meeting

June 2012-Marh 2013
Community and Housing Profile Analysis

October 2012-July 2013
Housing Expert and Planner Interviews
March 2013-May 2013
Report of Housing Expert Interviews
August 2013-October 2013
Report of the Planner Interviews

July 2013-April 2014
Preparation and Collection of Resident Surveys
Land Use and Zoning Regulation Reviews

May 2014
Affordable Housing Study Seminar
and Report

RESOURCES

1) Pew Research Center. http://www.pewresearch.org/
2) American Association for Public Opinion Research. http://www.aapor.org/Best_Practices1.htm#.UxoDeomYaM8
3) Michigan State University Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR). http://ippsr.msu.edu/osr/services.html
4) National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation. http://ncdd.org/rc/

Focus Groups

A focus group is a facilitated discussion involving a small number of people in a target group that is mediated by a skilled facilitator. Focus groups can provide more in-depth information on a small set of topics than is easily obtained by a survey. However, it is difficult to project focus group opinions or data onto an entire community. Because of this limitation, focus groups are often used in tandem with other methods to get a more in-depth understanding of a set of issues. For example, a survey might identify certain issues in a community and perhaps even the basic public opinion on the issues. However, a focus group can help decision makers identify why that opinion might be held and how deeply it is held. Similarly, after data collection or asset mapping is completed, a focus group can review findings and brainstorm solutions or explore issues more fully.

Group dynamics play a critical role in a focus group. Through dialogue and conversation, groups may discover issues that individuals (interviews or surveys) may not have considered.

At the same time, group dynamics may discourage some individuals from voicing their concerns or overemphasizing the opinions of others. Skilled facilitators are essential in controlling group dynamics in order to stay on topic, glean pertinent information, and allow everyone an opportunity to participate.

Focus groups offer the opportunity to gather responses from population groups that may be difficult to survey. In addition, the focus group format allows for brainstorming and more open-ended and diverse responses.

Corridor Design Portfolio

During a charrette for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue project in the Lansing area, stakeholders in a technical meeting (focus group) discuss and draw out possible solutions. Many times, participation is bolstered by holding meetings in locations where the target audience already gathers.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

As part of finalizing the planning phase of the Regional Growth: Choices for Our Future project, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission held a series of focus groups to explore citizens' preferences for implementing results. A graph depicting results is shown.

Source: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

Focus groups can be any cross section of a population. They can be random and general or target a specific group. This picture shows middle-school students participating in a design focus group in a Lansing school.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

Comparing Leader and Citizen Focus Groups: Implementing Regional Vision
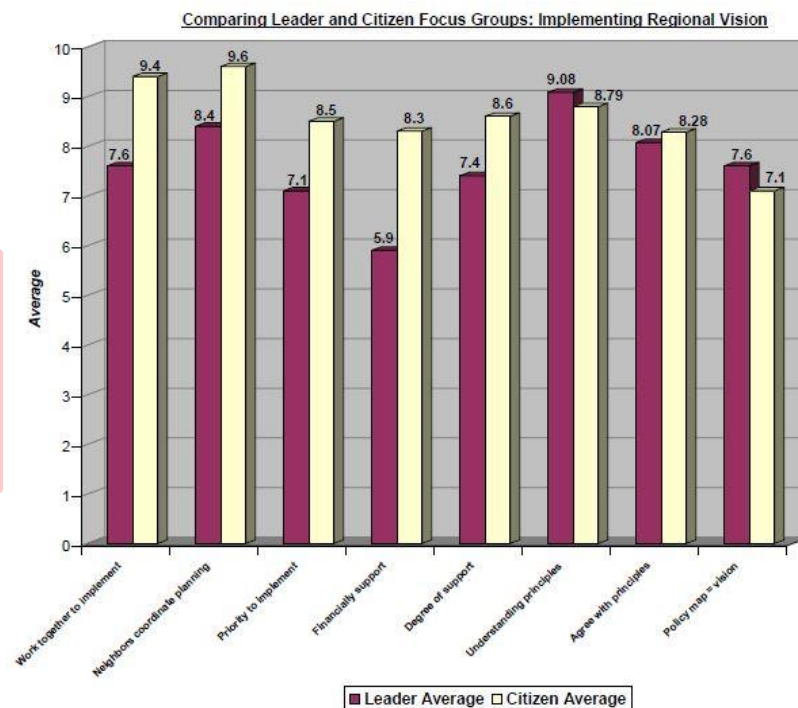
RESOURCES

1) Rutgers University New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station: Conducting Focus Groups. http://njaes.rutgers.edu/evaluation/resources/focus-groups.asp
2) International Association for Public Participation. http://www.iap2.org/
3) National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation. http://ncdd.org/rc/

Games as Public Input

Games can be a fun, effective, and unique activity to engage community members in planning decisions and there is increasing variety to them including chip games and virtual games. In physical chip games, "*players use chips to represent development attributes and place them on maps to create different scenarios for growth and change.*

Chip games and their variations allow citizens to try their own hands at scenario planning using Legos™, poker chips or other symbols to allocate units" of measure such as dwelling units, land area in acres or square feet, height of a building, number of new jobs, acres preserved, etc.

"In most cases, citizens are placed into small groups with maps of the planning area and are given some guidelines, such as required amounts of density, a certain number of units to allocate, or restrictions on placement and land uses. Each group must then create a scenario for the area by placing the chips on the map where the group would like to see the future land uses occur.

The Chip Game is a take-off on other low-tech participatory voting tools, and can be adapted for many different types of planning and decision-making processes. It is often used for allocating growth or creating land use plans. Chip Games can be used in combination with GIS-based software, like CommunityViz, to evaluate the impacts of the scenarios that participants develop. It can also be used in combination with keypad polling (see p. 4-25) to evaluate how all participants feel about different scenarios." (Orton Family Foundation Planning Tool Exchange.)
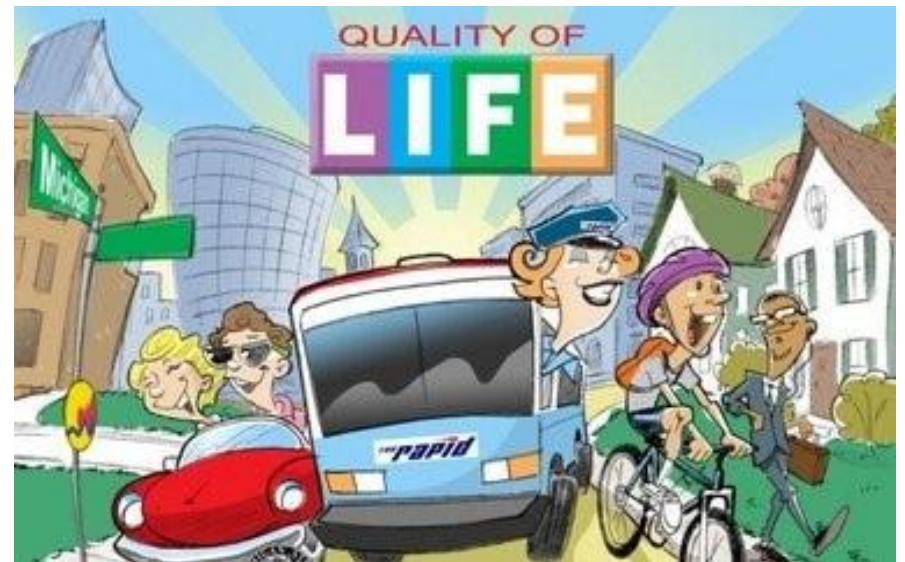
During a charrette for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue in the Lansing area, stakeholders in a focus group use paper "chips" that represent different buildings and dwelling density (both commercial and residential) to envision redevelopment and infill. The quantity and density of the chips to be allocated were determined through a Target Market Analysis (see TMA, p. 5-9).

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

During a visioning workshop in East Lansing, stakeholders used cardboard cutout elements of a road to design their ideal roadway.

Source: Holly Madill, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

Seeking input on a variety of topics along its Michigan Street Corridor, the Grand Rapids Planning Department developed the Quality of Life game, a spinoff from the popular "LIFE" board game. In this exercise, participants took the game with them, played the game, and then returned a booklet that contained participants responses to questions asked.

Source: The Rapidian/Chelsea LaForge.

RESOURCES

1) *Architecture and Urban Planning for Children: Games and Books That Inspire.* May 20, 2013. Renee van Staveren. Sustainable Cities Collective. http://sustainablecitiescollective.com/global-site-plans-grid/154651/architecture-and-urban-planning-children-games-and-books-inspire
2) Grand Rapids Green Pursuits Game. http://grcity.us/design-and-development-services/Planning-Department/Green-Grand-Rapids/Pages/Green-Pursuits.aspx

Social Media

"*Social media refers to interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks"* (Wikipedia.).

Social media is a tool for online social interaction which allows the user to network among other online users and provides a mechanism of users to interact and communicate with each other. It enables the user to self-publish content (text, pictures, video, documents). One advantage of this tool is its potential to reach a large (quantity and geography) and diverse (age, race, ethnicity, income) audience.

Social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook allow members of a community to group together and communicate with one another much faster and more effectively than traditional forms of communication, such as using the telephone or mailing informational flyers or post cards.

YouTube, Tumblr, Flickr, Blogs, Photobucket, Panoramio, GeoCommonds, Scribd, SlideShare, Vimeo and Wordle offer other forms of social media interactions. Web sites are yet another form of social media.

MindMixer and similar products is another social media outlet that is used by communities to help in the planning process. MindMixer allows community members to share photos, comments, and ideas with one another on a specific project or set of projects. MindMixer is not a free service as a subscription must be purchased. MiCommunity Remarks is a similar service that was developed by Carlisle Wortman Associates, a Michigan-based planning firm.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability is using MindMixer to create discussion around specific topics and asking participants to share their thoughts and ideas. For example: *How can we leverage the assets of our region for sustainable growth in the coming years? Do you have any ideas as to what is needed or what you would like to see in any area brownfields*?

Source: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

Wordle was used to capture stakeholders' vision of the future on an area during part of the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor charrette.

Source: Dover Kohl Associates.

As part of the Washtenaw County Sustainable Community project, Casa Latina conducted a baseline survey of the health and well-being factors of Latino residents and created a Facebook presence. The process includes residents in planning and implementing the survey, sharing the results, and prioritizing health and social service improvements.

Source: Casa Latina.

IN THE FUTURE:

RESOURCES

1) *Crowds Part One: Crowdsourcing for Civic Engagement*. March 2013. Nina Misuraca Ignaczak, Michigan Planner E-dition. http://www.planningmi.org/downloads/civic_innovation_march_2013.pdf
2) MiCommunity Remarks. Carlisle Wortman Associates, Inc. http://micommunityremarks.com/
3) "Utilizing Social Media in Watershed Planning and Preservation & Communicating Water Quality Data." Alan Bean. Presentation at the 2014 Saginaw Bay Watershed Conference on June 12, 2014. http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/modules.php?name=Documents&op=viewlive&sp_id=2586

Keypad Polling

"*Keypad polling is an electronic meeting support tool that allows users to respond to multiple-choice questions using a wireless keypad.*" It can enhance training, decision making, and engagement. "*A question from the facilitator or a participant is posed on a screen with a series of possible answers. Each participant equipped with a wireless keypad responds based on his/her knowledge and opinions. Responses are anonymous and instantly tallied, and are then displayed on screen.*"

The process is transparent and immediate, and everyone can see the collective response to the question. "*Based on the response, the moderator can change the direction of the meeting, or go into greater depth based on the level of understanding the group shows*.

Keypad polling is frequently used at meetings with two different formats—auditorium style, where audience members interact minimally with each other and simply vote on questions asked by a speaker or moderator; and table meetings, where participants are seated at small tables and asked to discuss issues with others before voting. Keypad polling can be used to collect feedback on nearly any issue or type of question, but can only collect responses for questions where respondents pick a single response, and for questions with no more than 10 possible responses" (Orton Family Foundation Planning Tool Exchange.).

Both hardware and software is required for this technique, although phone-based text message polling is also available. Phone-based text message systems allow audience members to text their votes, which are tallied in real-time to a website, from their phones. This website is then projected in the meeting room for all to see the responses.

One common use of Keypad Polling is for Visual Preference Surveys (see p. 4-17).

IF THE BRT WERE IN PLACE TODAY, AS ENVISIONED, WOULD YOU SOMETIMES RIDE IT?

NO 5%
MAYBE 14%
YES 82%

© Troy Homenchuk

This bar chart displays one of the questions and answers from keypad polling used during the "final" presentation for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor charrette in the Lansing area. This question was used to "take the pulse" of the audience relative to a proposed bus-rapid transit (BRT) system.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

This pie chart displays one of the questions and answers used during the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor charrette in the Lansing area.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

Stakeholders attending the "final" presentation for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor charrette in the Lansing area participate in keypad polling. The charrette team posed several in-depth questions not only about what was presented, but also about implementation in the future.

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.
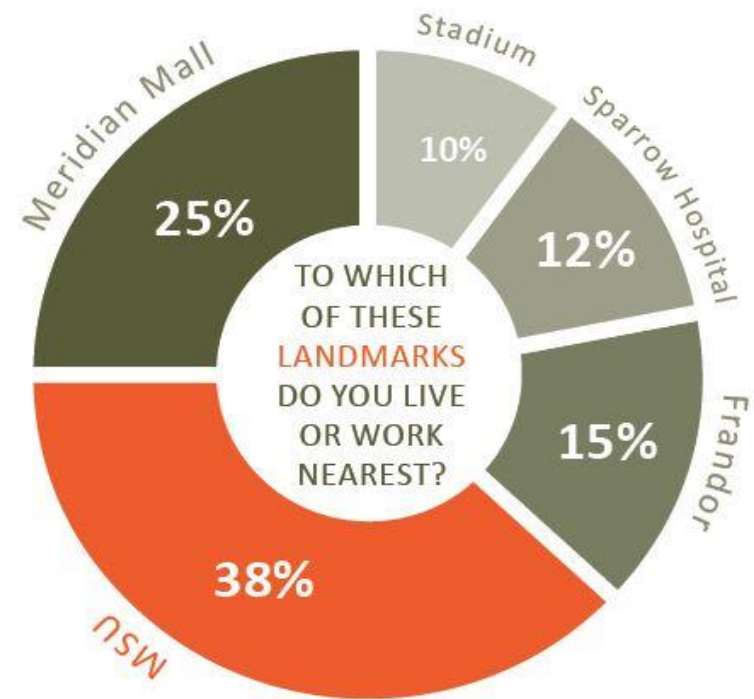
RESOURCES

1) *Using Keypad Polling to Make Meetings More Productive, Educational, and Participatory.* Spring 2010. David Campt and Matthew Freeman. 2010 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. Wiley InterScience. National Civic Review. DOI: 10.1002/ncr.20002. http://www.ncl.org/publications/ncr/99-1/Keypads.pdf
2) *Using Keypad Polling to Enhance Public Meetings*. June 2010. Greg Keidan. Western City. http://www.westerncity.com/Western-City/June-2010/Using-Keypad-Polling-to-Enhance-Public-Meetings/

Visual Preference Surveys

One type of survey that can be highly effective for soliciting input and can also be a self-discovery tool is the visual preference survey. Keypad polling (see p. 4-25) is often used to execute the survey and tally survey results.

A visual preference survey (VPS) is comprised of contrasting images of the built environment that is presented through a slide show at a meeting. The images are then rated by participants as to which types of streets, houses, stores, office buildings, parks, open space, and key civic features citizens like to see in their community.

"The VPS is often conducted at a public meeting or workshop organized to discuss some aspect of the land use and transportation planning process. Participants are given a few seconds to rate each of the slides on a scale allowing for a range of opinions (e.g., -10 to +10 with zero being 'neutral') depending upon how much they like or dislike an image. The quick pace of the survey seeks to gauge their initial, 'gut' reaction to the images that are presented.

The scores for each slide are then tallied to determine the group's average score—a quantified collective opinion for each image. The images with the highest negative and highest positive averages indicate where there is the most consensus in the group. The slides are shown again, and the participants are told the average score for each slide. Group members are asked why they rated the images the way they did - an activity that often generates spontaneous, high-energy discussion and debate" (Orton Family Foundation Planning Tool Exchange.).

This was one question in a visual preference survey that used keypad polling to tally results during the "final" presentation for the Michigan Avenue/Grand River Avenue corridor charrette in the Lansing area. Participants were asked to rate various types of urban form from "Love it!" "Indifferent" to "Hate it!"

Source: Dover-Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced with permission.

This visual preference survey was conducted via mail in Charlevoix County.

Source: Rod Cortright, Charlevoix County, Michigan State University Extension.
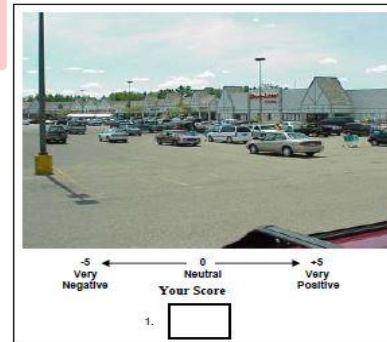
This visual preference survey was conducted in hard copy form. Participants used dots to display their preferences between two contrasting images. This was part of an open house during a charrette in Suttons Bay Township.

Source: Kurt Schindler, Michigan State University Extension.

Charlevoix County Community Survey

The Charlevoix County Land Use Plan is now 30 years old and out-of-date. The County Planning Commission is in the process of updating this plan and needs your help. This survey is an attempt to obtain your opinions about future growth in the County. While growth and change are inevitable, the County Planning Commission wants to insure that when growth occurs, it will be in a form which meets the needs and desires of current and future residents.

We are asking that you take a few minutes to fill out this form. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 28, 2003.

Sincerely,

Dennis Jason

Chairman, Charlevoix County Planning Commission

January 2003

■ **Section One - Visual Preferences**

On this page and the next are images of development typical to Northern Michigan. Please rate your opinions about these images on a scale ranging from -5 to +5. A score of -5 indicates a very negative opinion, while a score of +5 indicates a very positive one. A score of 0 indicates you do not have an opinion one way or another. Please rate each image individually, not in comparison to other images.

RESOURCES

1) Visual Preferences Surveys. Transportation Planning Capacity Building. U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration. http://www.planning.dot.gov/publicinvolvement/pi_documents/4c-g.asp
2) Visual Preference Survey. Greenfield Tool Box. Calgary Regional Partnership. http://greenfield.calgaryregion.ca/tools/greenfield_process_visualPreferenceSurvey.pdf
3) Visual Preference Surveys. University of Delaware Complete Communities Project Site. http://completecommunitiesde.org/public-engagement/vps/

Audits

An audit is a survey used to evaluate elements of a community. Often, they are used to evaluate streets and neighborhoods to determine how easily and safely they can be walked and biked. Through the audit process, participants' concerns for pedestrian and bicycle safety, access, comfort and convenience of the environment are uncovered. An audit can also be used to identify potential alternatives or solutions (such as engineering treatments, policy changes, or education and enforcement measures).

Audits are a unique way of engaging citizens in planning, design and construction projects. Because citizens are walking or biking in the community and making real observations about their experiences, many participants remember the experience longer, are able to translate their observations to solutions developed in plans and designs, and take a more vested role in the project at hand.

Most audits follow a standardized set of questions and procedures. While an audit can be performed by any individual or community group, more formal audits can also be conducted. These are usually performed by a multidisciplinary team of trained professionals, including engineers, planners, transportation researchers, pedestrian and bicycle specialists, and others. Involving citizens in these interdisciplinary teams can also support educational goals associated with a project as citizens learn from professionals. The audit, however is a *preliminary* tool to gather information and potential solutions and is usually coupled with workshops to develop recommendations further (Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center.).

Table 1: PEQI 2.0 Indicators by Domain

Intersection Safety	Traffic Volume	Street Design	Land Use	Perceived Safety
• Crosswalks • High visibility crosswalk • Intersection lighting • Traffic control • Pedestrian/ Countdown signal • Wait time • Crossing speed • Pedestrian refuge island • Curb ramps • Intersection traffic calming features • Pedestrian engineering countermeasures	• Number of vehicle lanes • Posted speed limit • Traffic volume • Street traffic calming features	• Continuous sidewalk • Width of sidewalk • Width of throughway • Large sidewalk obstructions • Sidewalk impediments • Trees • Driveway cuts • Presence of a buffer • Planters/ gardens	•Public seating • Public art/ historic sites • Retail use and public places	• Pedestrian scale lighting • Illegal graffiti • Litter • Empty spaces

Sometimes the distance covered in an audit is too far to walk or bike in the time allowed. Participants in a workshop in Coldwater used buses to evaluate their community. While observations were made along the route, strategic stopping points were visited where participants could explore the area and make more detailed observations.

Source: Holly Madill, Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments created the Northern Michigan Community Placemaking Guidebook, which includes a Place Evaluation Form.

Source: Northern Michigan Community Placemaking Guidebook. Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. http://www.nwm.org/userfiles/filemanager/831/.

The Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index (PEQI) is used to prioritize improvements in pedestrian infrastructure during planning processes. The PEQI is an observational survey that quantifies street and intersection factors that affect travel behaviors. Within these five categories are 31 indicators that reflect the quality of *the built environment for pedestrians.*

Source: San Francisco Department of Public Health.

IV. Appendix & Resources

Place Evaluation Form
(created by the Project for Public Spaces and the Metropolitan Planning Council)

Site _____

Rate the Place

Comfort and Image	Poor			Good	Notes
Overall attractiveness	1	2	3	4	
Feeling of safety	1	2	3	4	
Cleanliness/Quality of Maintenance	1	2	3	4	
Comfort of places to sit	1	2	3	4	

Comments/Notes:

Access & Linkages	Poor			Good	Notes
Visibility from a distance	1	2	3	4	
Ease in walking to the place	1	2	3	4	
Transit access	1	2	3	4	
Clarity of information/signage	1	2	3	4	

Comments/Notes:

Uses & Activities	Poor			Good	Notes
Mix of stores/services	1	2	3	4	
Frequency of events/activities	1	2	3	4	
Overall activity of area	1	2	3	4	
Economic vitality	1	2	3	4	

Comments/Notes:

Sociability	Poor			Good	Notes
Number of people in groups	1	2	3	4	
Evidence of volunteerism	1	2	3	4	
Sense of pride and ownership	1	2	3	4	
Presence of children and seniors	1	2	3	4	

Comments/Notes:

RESOURCES

1) Federal Highway Administration's Road Safety Audit (RSA) Guidelines and Prompt Lists for Bicycle or Pedestrian Facilities.
2) Worksite Walkability. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/walkability/index.htm
3) Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety. Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates and the Project ACTION Advisory Committee and Team. http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pdf/PlanDesign_Tools_Audits_EasterSealsBusStopAccess2006.pdf

Arts-Based Civic Engagement

Community engagement is the process of public participation and involvement that promotes relationship building through learning, action, and the expression of needs and values. Community engagement can bring vibrancy and innovation to planning practice by strengthening the degree of public commitment to planning processes and making more perspectives available to decision makers.

Creative tools for community engagement include innovative visual-art techniques, storytelling, social-networking technology, exhibits, music, performance, festivals, and community gatherings. When planners use these tools, it can indicate that they are receptive to feedback, genuine in their acknowledgment of others' viewpoints, and committed to making participation and the development of relationships as easy as possible.

Planners can use arts and cultural tools to expand their collection of engagement strategies as part of an appeal to diverse populations that is broader than what traditional tools alone can achieve. A multitude of available options gives community members the opportunity to find the most appropriate method of involvement for them.

Creative tools can:

1. Strengthen the understanding and exploration of community values;
2. Increase stakeholder involvement; and
3. Better engage the public in community and urban design projects."

Source: "Community Character: How Arts and Cultural Strategies Create, Reinforce, and Enhance Sense of Place." 2011. Kelly Ann Beavers and Kimberley Hodgson. Arts and Culture Briefing Papers 03. American Planning Association.

The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) has developed a grant program to support public art for placemaking. As part of the program, communities must put into place policies that support the arts, like establishing an arts commission, along with a RFP process and addressing liability and maintenance issues.

Source: Lansing State Journal/photographer Rod Sanford.

This diagram from the Arts & Civic Engagement Tool Kit gives examples of ways that the arts can foster civic engagement.

Source: Animating Democracy http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org.
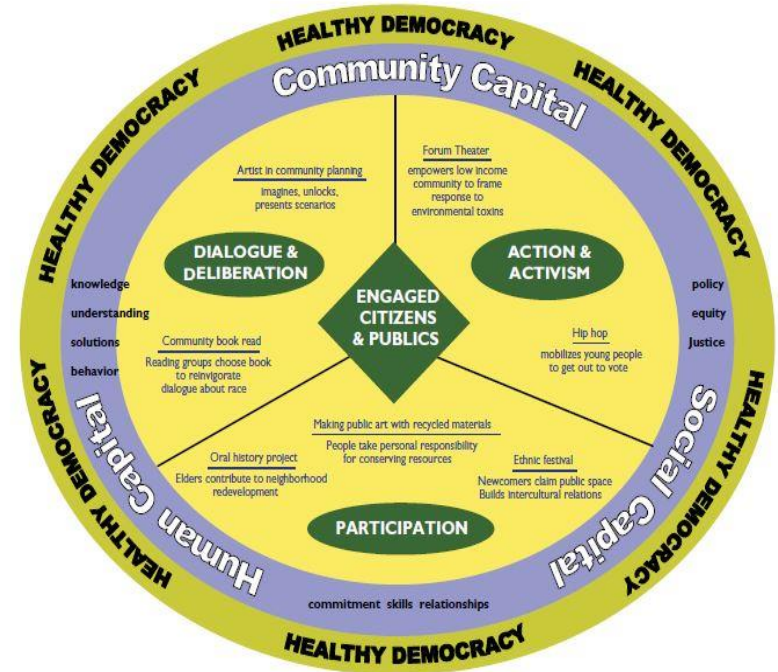
Paint the Pavement (PtP) is a program that promotes community building and "Placemaking" through creating neighborhood art. Neighbors in St. Paul come together, create a design, petition for approval by the City, and hold a "paint day" to create their own community square. Through the mural creation process, social connections and relationships between neighbors increase, strengthening the ability of the community to respond to issues and opportunities*.*

Source: Paint the Pavement. http://www.paintthepavement.org/.

RESOURCES

1) *Community Character: How Arts and Cultural Strategies Create, Reinforce, and Enhance Sense of Place*. 2011. Arts and Culture Briefing Papers 03. American Planning Association. http://www.planning.org/research/arts/briefingpapers/character.htm
2) Animating Democracy. http://animatingdemocracy.org/

Social equity and justice have continued to grow in significance ever since the start of the Civil Rights Movement. Ensuring broad citizen and stakeholder participation in planning, project development, and project review are staples of sound community planning, but ensuring social justice goes beyond standard operating procedures. It involves making concerted efforts to involve those who are traditionally disenfranchised, underrepresented, and those with minority viewpoints, including those that regularly disagree with local government. These groups often include the elderly, poor, youth, disabled/handicapped, Native Americans and other minorities, displaced people, single-parent households and immigrants.

Current techniques to accomplish meaningful participation and inclusion center on removing obstacles to participation, rethinking and deploying new engagement strategies, asking the right questions (and listening), and clearing regulatory and programmatic barriers that limit accessibility in the built environment. The techniques presented cover all four areas.

But when deploying traditional civic engagement techniques, inclusionary planning is more than simply inviting minorities and traditionally underrepresented groups and making it easier for them to attend. It's about understanding historical contexts that affect perceptions and affect opinions, especially where prior efforts created unmet expectations and mistrust, ahead of time; listening; separating values from actionable common ground; and recognizing that final plans and projects must address the interests of all groups, or there will neither be consensus nor consent. It means that thought leaders in underrepresented groups are engaged early and often in the process, not simply when public comment is needed. This includes developing and deploying outreach strategies together.
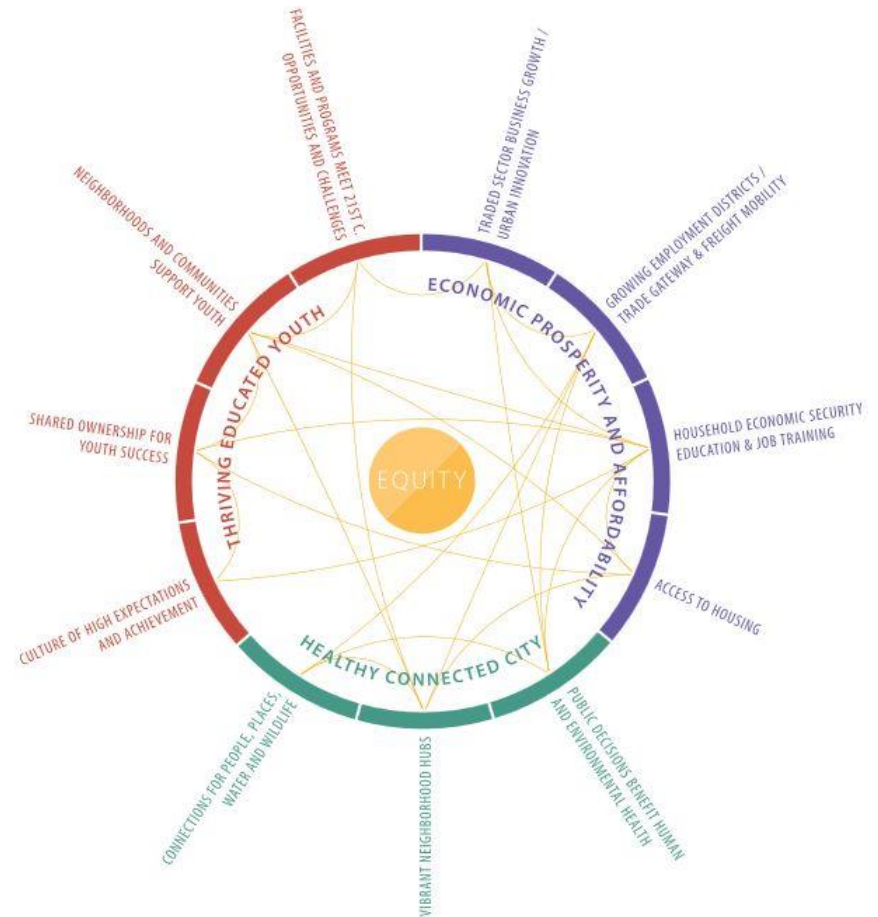
Graphic source: City of Portland, Portland Plan.

On the facing page is an illustration depicting some of the concepts or issues that are associated with social justice and community planning.

Image source (opposite page): Dover Kohl and Associates, under contract to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, reproduced by permission. Overlay illustration by Na Li, Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University.
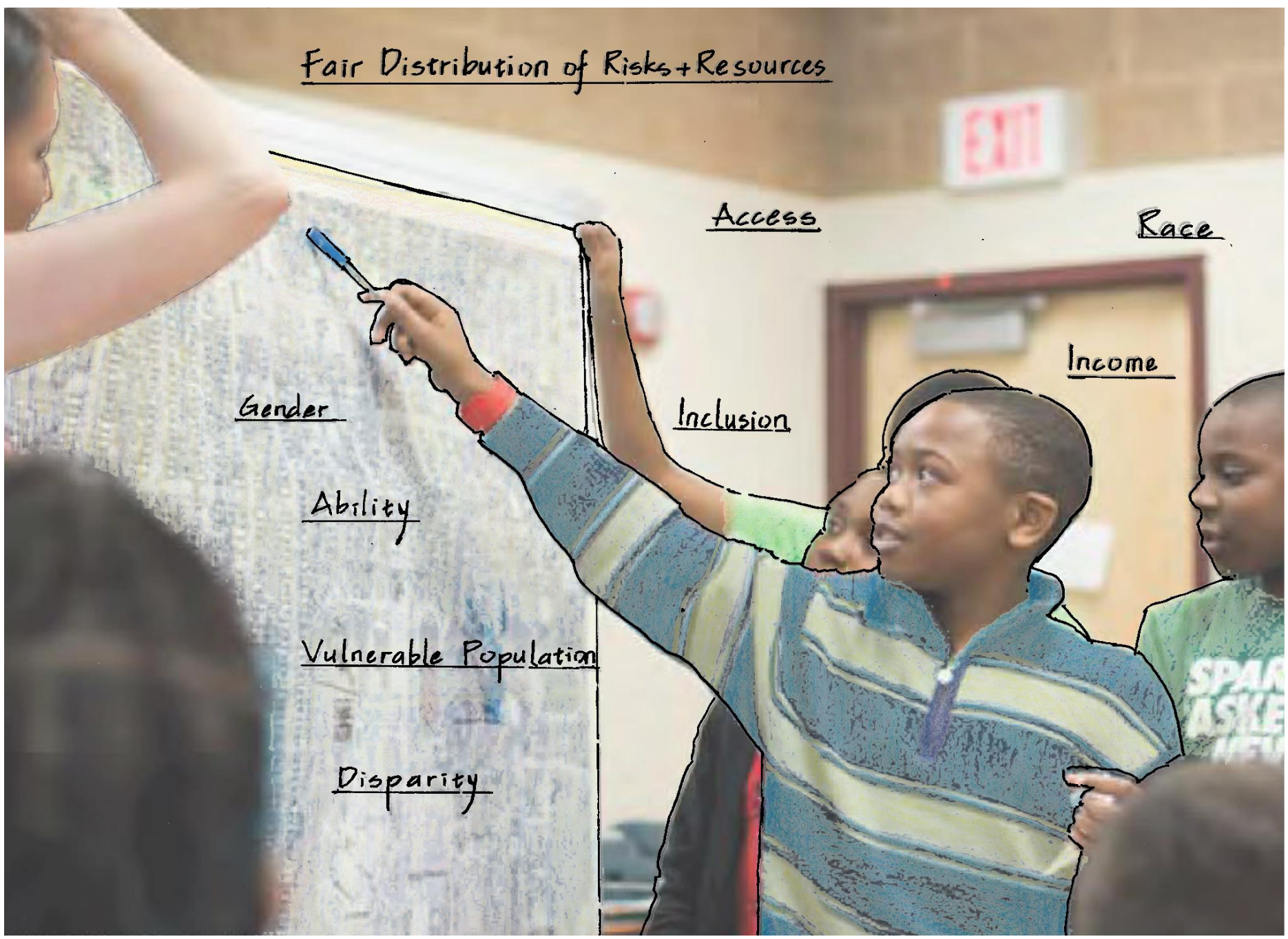
Fair Distribution of Risks + Resources

Access

Race

Gender

Inclusion

Income

Ability

Vulnerable Population

Disparity

Coalition Building

Many of the problems that communities face are ones that cannot be solved by any one group of stakeholders. This is true of many issues associated with social justice as well. Collaboration is necessary to solve complex community issues, especially when resources are limited.

The community coalition is an effective tool for coordinating and leveraging limited community resources to solve problems. By connecting a diverse set of individuals and organizations, coalitions cut across multiple sectors to seek comprehensive, and often innovative approaches to community problems. Goals and activities are decided on collectively, and member resources (time, effort, funding, etc.) are channeled to meeting shared goals.

While coalitions can be of any scale: local, regional, or state, or cut across levels of government at their core they seek to work towards a common goal with other organizations and individuals. Coalitions should be highly dynamic; able to shift energy and focus to emerging and relevant issues. Members may also drift in and out of the coalition's work depending on its relevance to their personal or organizational missions.

While coalitions can be highly effective mechanisms for addressing community issues, they require care, attention, and effective management to sustain momentum and stay on task.

Coalition Assessment: Please indicate the degree to which you agree/disagree with each of the following statements. Provide one answer per item or row. To obtain the best picture of your coalition's strengths and need areas, all questions are required unless indicated as optional.

Coalition Performance:
Please consider the overall purpose, function and performance of the coalition.

Statement	Strongly Disagree 0	Disagree 1	Neutral 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4
1. Members have a clear shared understanding of the coalition's purpose.	O	O	O	O	O
2. The coalition has identified clear goals and specific objectives.	O	O	O	O	O
3. Members feel comfortable representing the coalition's intentions.	O	O	O	O	O
4. The coalition is successful at communicating to individuals and organizations in the community how the coalition's actions will address problems that are important to them.	O	O	O	O	O
5. The coalition is successful at carrying out comprehensive activities that connect multiple services, programs or systems.	O	O	O	O	O
6. The coalition is able to integrate multi-disciplinary strategies together to create healthy(ier) communities.	O	O	O	O	O
7. The coalition is structured and functions in a way that is effective at meeting its goals.	O	O	O	O	O
Coalition Performance Subtotal: (highest score possible=28)					
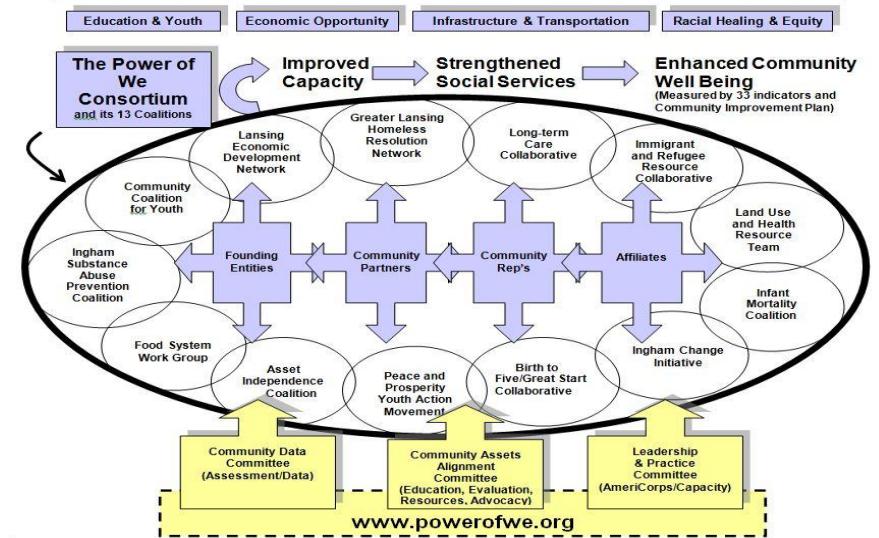
The Community Coalition Assessment Tool (CCAT) is a 36-item survey designed "to enable coalitions and partnerships to self-assess internal, relational, and organizational function." The goal is to help coalitions improve capacity to address policy, environmental, and system changes.

Source: Community Coalition Assessment Tool. Michigan Department of Community Health.
http://mihealthtools.org/ccat/default.asp?tab=faqs.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan, a diverse, statewide coalition dedicated to reducing childhood obesity through policy change celebrates the passage of Complete Streets legislation.

Source: Healthy Kids Healthy Michigan. http://www.healthykidshealthymich.com/.

The Power of We Consortium (PWC) is an inclusive, collaborative body of over 250 human services, non-profit, governmental, faith-based, and business sector stakeholders that promote systems reform around many community issues in Ingham County. It desires to foster community-wide collaboration and engage all segments of the population in community improvement efforts.

Source: Power of We Consortium. http://powerofwe.org/who-we-are/.

RESOURCES

1) *Coalitions and Partnerships in Community Health*. 2007. Francis Dunn Butterfoss. http://www.amazon.com/Coalitions-Partnerships-Community-Frances-Butterfoss/dp/0787987859/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1402089862&sr=8-1&keywords=community+coalition
2) Developing Effective Coalitions: An Eight Step Guide. Prevention Institute. http://www.preventioninstitute.org/index.php?option=com_jlibrary&view=article&id=104&Itemid=127

Strategic Doing

Traditional thinking around addressing social justice centers on civic engagement techniques (see pgs. 4-3—4-31) targeted specifically toward traditionally underrepresented populations. These techniques usually fall in the middle of Arnstein's ladder of engagement and while adequate for some purposes, many practitioners are exploring how to move up that ladder with underrepresented populations. Three areas have emerged to advance this ideal: co-learning, learning communities, and communities of practice.

Co-learning espouses a sharing of information and through inquiry, stakeholders engage in a dialogue that defines an issue and works toward a collective solution. This differs from a traditional learning model where there is a teacher who dispenses knowledge and a student(s) who acquires it. Co-learning is more of a mutual exchange.

One form of co-learning is called Strategic Doing, a method of strategically moving a network toward a common goal. Strategic Doing is a continuous process of thinking together, trying new things, and translating ideas into action. Leaders guide open conversations around four questions:

1. What could we do together?
2. What should we do together?
3. What will we do together?
4. When will we get back together?

In Strategic Doing, even mistakes are valued as opportunities for learning and moving forward.
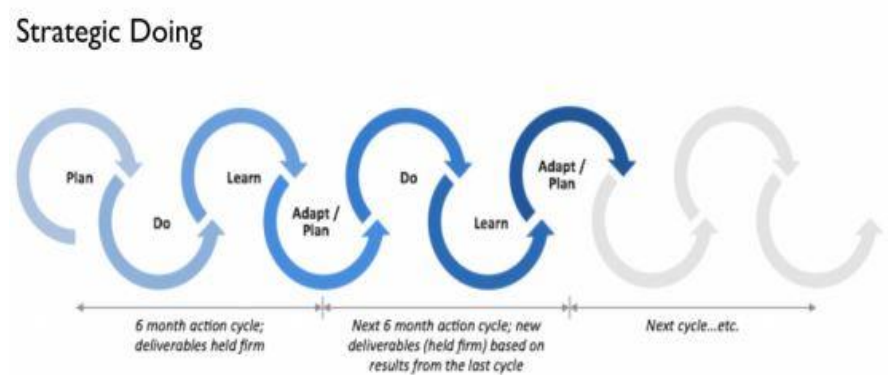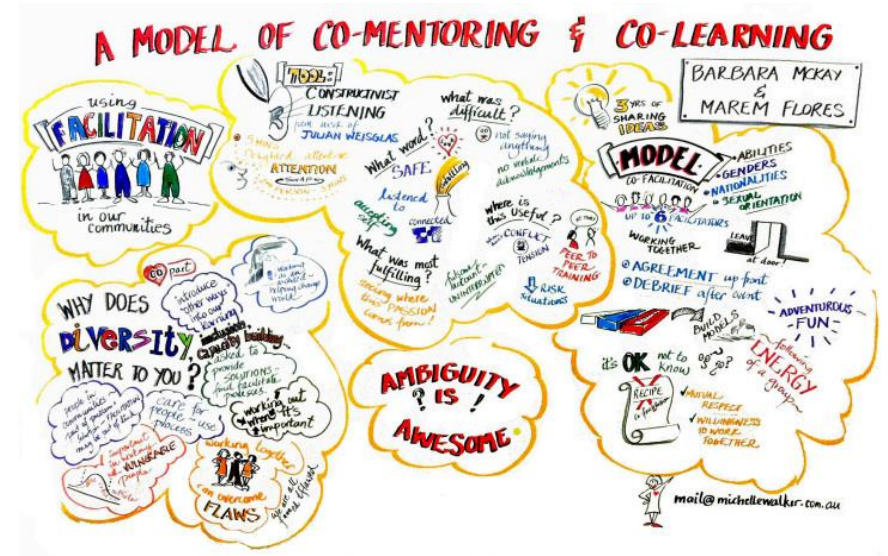
This graphic displays the many concepts involved in co-learning, where community members learn from each other and address issues collectively based on their learning.

Source: Barbara McKay's Session on Co-Mentoring and Co-Learning. April 10, 2012. Barbara McKay and Marem Flores. http://ifvpcommunity.ning.com/photo/barbara-mckay-s-session-on-co-mentoring-and-co-learning.

Strategic Doing, a process that helps open networks move toward a common outcome, revolves around asking for questions repeatedly.

Source: Purdue Center for Regional Development.

Strategic planning in organizations is usually a linear process that requires a hierarchical organization in place to execute the plans. The approach does not work well in complex, hierarchical-free environments that are continuously shifting, as is the case in networks. Strategic Doing is a flexible alternative for open, loosely coupled networks that invites us to do our strategic thinking and action differently.

Source: Comparing Strategic Planning and Strategic Doing. May 1, 2013. Ed Morrison, Lax Kozmon, Strategy-Nets Services, LLC. http://www.edmorrison.com/hello-world/.

RESOURCES

1) *Strategic Doing: The Art and Practice of Strategic Action in Open Networks.* Ed Morrison. February 2010. Purdue Center for Regional Development. http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us/DocumentCenter/View/1687
2) Intro to Communities of Practice. EB Wenger-Trayer. http://wenger-trayner.com/theory/

Leveling the Planning Field

While securing public participation through effective civic engagement techniques is important, eliminating barriers to participation is an equally important step in ensuring that underrepresented populations have access to public processes.

There are some common barriers to participation for traditionally underrepresented populations that are outlined below. It is important to reach out to these communities to explore if there are others and how best to address them.

1. Logistics – Select a variety of venues, times, and/or days that align with the population that you seek to engage. Consider holding it at a workplace during a lunch hour or break.
2. Disabilities – Make sure the venue is free from physical barriers for those with physical disabilities. In addition to the site, consider transportation needs to the facility.
3. Economics – There are often direct (transportation, daycare) and indirect costs (time away from family or work, balancing priorities) associated with participating in public meetings. Eliminating these costs by providing daycare, meals, transportation vouchers or gas cards can help those who might not otherwise participate.
4. Language – Avoid using industry jargon and accommodate other languages.
5. Culture – Consider how other cultures participate in public processes and learn how to incorporate some of those approaches.

NashvilleNext Kurdish Community Page

Video: An Invitation to Metro Nashville's Kurdish Community

The Planning & Zoning Center at MSU used an ice cream social event as a backdrop for a public input session in Flint. Children's activities included a coloring station and bounce houses. Many parents came and participated because there were free events for their children and would not have otherwise come.

Source: Planning & Zoning Center at MSU.

Recognizing Barriers to Participation

Inadequate explanations of background and technical material

Difficulty participating in technical discussions

Inadequate minutes from meetings

Overwhelming amounts of reading

Perceived inability to influence issues

Lack of time to participate

If the topics to be addressed are complex, there can be even more barriers to participation.

Source: Stakeholder Involvement & Public Participation at EPA. 2001. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
http://www.epa.gov/evaluate/pdf/stakeholder/stakeholder-involvement-public-participation-at-epa.pdf.

The City of Nashville created a web page specifically for engaging their Kurdish community in development of a new comprehensive plan. Engagement includes translation, surveys, videos and attending the Eid Festival to gain input.

Source: NashvilleNext. City of Nashville.
http://www.nashville.gov/Government/NashvilleNext/NashvilleNext-Kurdish-Community-Page.aspx.

RESOURCES

1) *Removing Barriers: Planning Meetings that are Accessible to All Participants*. 2005. North Carolina Office on Disability and Health, in Collaboration with The Center for Universal Design. http://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/other-resources/NCODH_RemovingBarriersPlanningMeetings.pdf

2) "Chapter 4 Public Participation." *Plan Commission Handbook*. University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/PlanCommissions/PC4_PublicParticipation.pdf

Regulatory and Programmatic Changes

Removing barriers to participation and capturing the voice of the underrepresented through effective civic engagement techniques are common challenges facing many communities. Another piece to this puzzle is making regulatory and programmatic changes to allow for equitable access to quality of life necessities and amenities: in essence breaking down the physical barriers in the built environment that encourage separation and segregation.

Some of the answers here can be found in removing barriers from zoning ordinances so that mixed-use, mixed-density developments can occur. This involves design standards that guide multi-family housing to locations near groceries, healthcare, job centers, and transit that is connected with regional access to job centers and other amenities.

While some communities have had moderately-priced dwelling unit programs (see Affordable Housing, p. 1-21) in place for decades, only a handful of communities across the country are effectively addressing equity in their plans and making regulatory and programmatic changes.

The Equitable Development ToolKit or EDTK from PolicyLink identifies 27 tools to reverse patterns of segregation and disinvestment, prevent displacement, and promote equitable revitalization. They are divided into four categories: affordable housing, economic opportunity, health equity and place, and land use and environment.

King County, Washington developed an Equity and Social Justice Initiative that uses community engagement worksheets and impact review tools to evaluate projects for equity and justice.
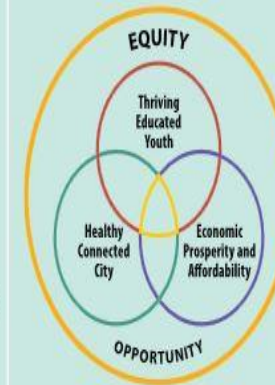
Framework for Equity

- Close the gaps
- Engage the community
- Build partnerships
- Launch a racial and ethnic justice initiative
- Increase focus on disability equity
- Increase internal accountability

3 Integrated Strategies

EQUITY

Thriving Educated Youth

Healthy Connected City

Economic Prosperity and Affordability

OPPORTUNITY

12 Measures of Success

1. Equity and inclusion
2. Resident satisfaction
3. Educated youth
4. Prosperous households
5. Growing businesses
6. Job growth
7. Transit and active transportation
8. Reduced carbon emissions
9. Complete neighborhoods
10. Healthier people
11. Safer city
12. Healthy watersheds

Nashville is in the middle of developing their comprehensive, countywide plan and equity is playing a key role in its development. One background report is dedicated solely to equity and inclusion.

Source: "Partnering for an Equitable and Inclusive Nashville." 2013. NashvilleNext. City of Nashville. http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/next-report-Equity-and-Inclusion.pdf.

King County, Washington has adopted an ordinance to deploy "*fair and just principles*" to implement its countywide strategic plan.

Source: Signature Report. 2010. King County, Washington http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/8657.

Portland's comprehensive plan is constructed on an equity framework that directs the way the City and partners work: how decisions are made, where investments occur, and how to engage the public. *"It provides a lens for evaluating and guiding how the partners identify and implement action to reduce disparities."*

Source: The Portland Plan. 2012. City of Portland. www.pdxplan.com.

110   1. Development of analytical tools to support all branches' departments and
111 agencies in identifying the equity impacts of policies and decisions and ways in which to
112 amplify positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts;
113   2. Development of guidelines which can be implemented across all branches'
114 departments and agencies for outreach, communication and community engagement to
115 improve the scope and effectiveness of county efforts to ensure that all communities
116 receive information and have the opportunity to shape county policies and services;
117   3. Identifying focus areas and supporting the development of policies and
118 actions that improve fairness and opportunity in county government organizational
119 practices, including all employment practices such as hiring, training, retention and
120 promotion and business practices such as contracting, procurement and grant writing;

RESOURCES

1) Equity Tools. PolicyLink. http://www.policylink.org/equity-tools
2) Social Equity and Planning Policy. Adopted January 7, 2013. Michigan Association of Planning. http://www.planningmi.org/downloads/social_equity_policy_final_2013.pdf