

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

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A PRIMER

Susan Nagy, Lakeshore Arts and Karin Eaton, Mural Routes

# BUZZ words

- Community Engagement
- Capacity Building
- Community Organizing
- Public Participation
- Citizen Engagement
- Community Development

Key thing to remember: It includes both a **PROCESS** and an **OUTCOME**

# Definition

*The process of getting people better connected into the community and ensuring that the services/program being designed/created meets the specific needs of the people you are working with.*

*Building a collective vision.*



BOTHER

# Reasons why you engage a community

- Grant expectations
- Provides solutions for a common shared cause
- Embraces collective action
- Builds healthy neighbourhoods
- Recognizes diverse interests of a community
- Gives participants a voice in the process
- Provides community ownership to a project
- Creates possible employment opportunities
- Creates long-term benefits

# REMEMBER!



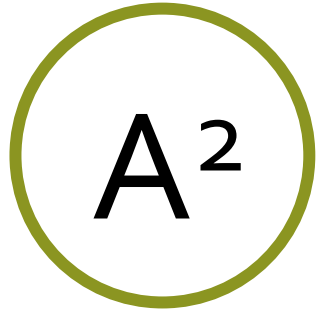
Once you open the door and invite public participation, you **MUST** be prepared to incorporate their voice into your project.

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Top of Mind in the Planning Process

Community Interactions



Authentic

Accessible



Responsive



Meaningful



# Case Study

- Mural Concept created by Artist
- Wall owner and artist very happy with the concept presented. BUT....
- Grant expectations included two community engagement opportunities.
- Beware of tokenism.
- At this stage, how does one incorporate meaningful engagement?





- Artist was convinced to build into his design places where the community could contribute.
- A session was renamed Community Information Soiree. Evaluation forms were presented at the end of the presentation.
- One outcome: The process was documented by a community volunteer with a panache for photography and a young student captured video testimonial during the installation process of passerbys. The photos and video were shared on the organizations blog.
- Updates were be posted on social media platforms as part 2 of the engagement process.

# Steps in Community Engagement

## STEP ONE

Set a clear, precise goal. Think back to WHY bother.

ALSO identify any limitations/boundaries that the community needs to be mindful of when participating in the planning including:

- Time constraints
- Resources
- Legalities (if any)
- Grant restrictions

# STEP TWO

Determine the level of impact or involvement you want from the community and who will make up your team.

**HIGH DEGREE** – Whole community.

Project has a strong possibility of powerful impact and the greatest possibility of conflicting opinions.

**HIGH DEGREE** – Selected or targeted group.

Stakeholders have a strong interest in the project theme or specific site.

**MODEST DEGREE** – Moderate community interest.

Target a variety of groups – widen the net.

**LOW DEGREE** – Open call. Not targeted. Has a low risk of controversy.

# STEP THREE

*Be clear about the purpose of the engagement.*

- Is it a consultation?
- Is it information sharing?
- Is it a decision-making opportunity?

## **Think back to the Case Study.**

The process wasn't determined prior to the launch of the project. Classified as a Information sharing session but was able to incorporate some community engagement throughout the process.

# STEP FOUR

## Determining the Engagement Process

3 Methods for Building Relationships + Collaboration+ Trust

- Communication Methods
- Consultation Methods
- Public Decision-Making Methods

# Communication Methods

Getting the message out

Newspaper Ad, Media Release, Direct Mail, Signage,  
Notice at Venue, Radio Ad, Blog, Newsletter, Billboard,  
Banner Ad on Web, Podcast, Postcard, Email, Vlog

# Consultation Methods

Investing in People

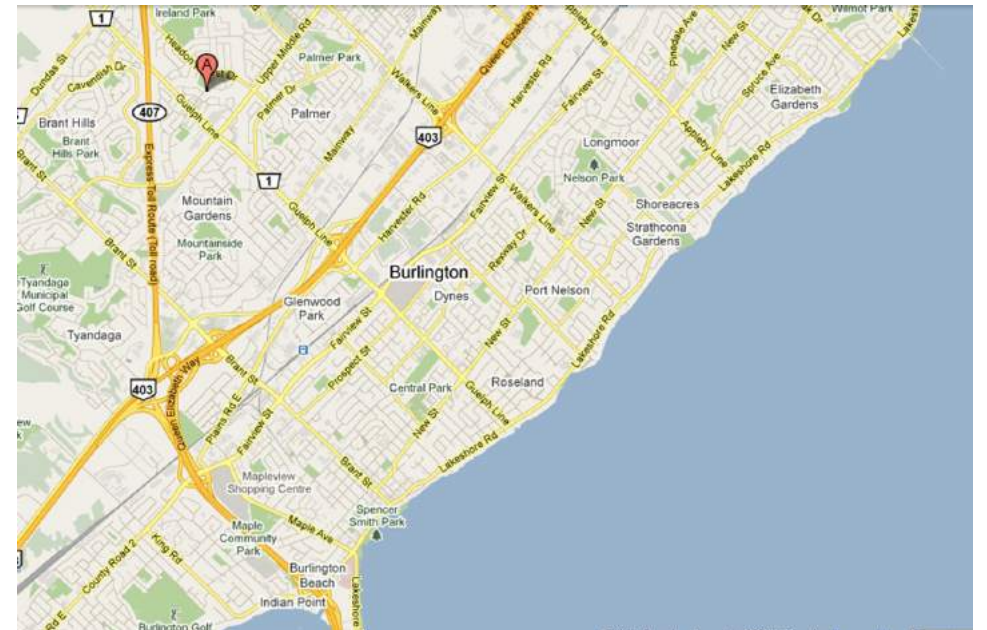
Survey, Suggestion Box, Phone-in, Public Meeting,  
Stakeholder Meeting, Focus Group, Charette,  
Community Mapping Exercise



# Community Mapping Exercise

## An artistic method of gathering information

- Helps to understand how people view their neighbourhoods/area in discussion
- Pose one or a series of questions to the participants that will explore an issue, stimulate discussion and/or identify areas of conflict



# Public Decision-making Methods

Building a healthy community

Advisory Committee

Jury Panel

Example of building an Advisory team:

Lakeshore Arts and Culture Days

# We've got their input. Now what??

Ensure that information gathered is incorporated into the design/outreach/plan whatever the goal was that was initially stated.

Share the remaining process with the group/public. Be clear in your intentions.

- Create and share your timeframe
- How and when decisions will be made and who will be making them
- Any further opportunities for engagement
- Whether individuals/groups can be involved in the implementation stage and if so, how

# Evaluation of the process. How did we do?

## High level input

Have the community help develop the evaluation process and set the goals for success.

## Moderate or Low Input

You establish the measureables to evaluate the community engagement process based on your original goals and targets and create tools to capture data. Remember the consultation methods, they are also applicable here.

**Resources:** Theory of Change is a method or technique that can assist communities to think about, plan and evaluate their work. <http://www.theoryofchange.org>

# Case Study

A mural based on the Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

*To not limit recognition of family to men and women, but to make it a human right for all people of all genders, including our transgender community members.*

- The mural had community involvement in the implementation
- It has since been a victim of continuous vandalism and tagging

How might community consultation aided a more positive outcome?





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