BEST PRACTICES IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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TOPICS

- Goals
- Requirements
- Stakeholders
- Techniques
- Engagement
- Adaptation
- Records
- Questions

What questions do you have about community engagement?

GOALS

- Build support for the plan
  - Business community
  - Residents
  - Elected officials
  - Staff
- Transparency
- Gather meaningful input
- Reflect the community’s unique attributes
- Find a champion for implementation
- Meeting the minimum requirements
Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning, Procedures (Rules of DCA, Chapter 110-12-1-04)

- Public Hearings
  - Initiation Hearing
  - Transmittal Hearing
  - Adoption Hearing

- Developing the Plan – each element of the plan must be prepared with considerable opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders
  - Minimum techniques
    - Steering Committee
    - Needs and opportunities list generated by SWOT or similar analysis

PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Develop a Community Participation Plan
  - Identifies target stakeholders
  - Engagement techniques to be used
  - Schedule of activities
  - Should be updated periodically
- Conduct Public Workshop(s)
- Maintain a Project Website
- Interview leadership and stakeholders

Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning, Community Involvement (Rules of DCA, Chapter 110-12-1-02)

- Identification of Stakeholders
- Identification of Participation Techniques
- Conduct Participation Program
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STAKEHOLDERS
- Compile a list
- Seek guidance
  - Supplemental planning recommendations
  - Regional Commission
- Steering Committee
  - Governing authority
  - Local economic development practitioners
  - Local government staff
- Have the committee meet regularly

What is your community’s composition?
Who typically shows up to meetings?
Where can you find those that don’t show up?
Are you willing to go there?

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TECHNIQUES
- Website
- Flyers
- Kiosks at events
- Focus Groups
- Social Media
- Online meetings
- Letters
- Contests

- TV
- Press Releases
- Email
- Surveys
- Charrettes
- Open Houses
- Comment Wall

What else?

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ENGAGEMENT
- Public involvement drives the schedule
- Steps in the process
  - Preparation
  - Review
  - Logistics
  - Presentation
  - Follow up
  - Record keeping
- Keys to Success
  - Be Prepared
  - Be Professional
  - Be Flexible
ADAPTATION

- What can go wrong?
  - Weather
  - Miss the meeting or are late
  - Equipment malfunction
  - Schedule Conflict
  - Locked out of venue
  - No one shows up
  - Hostile crowd
  - Wrong information

Any good stories of meetings gone wrong?

PREPARATION

- Know where the sacred cows are
- Be brief and organized
- Know your audience

FACILITATION

- Some people will try to bait you into an argument
- Don't go on the attack
- Talking points
  - I just want to ...
  - Let me put that another way ...
  - Let me tell you a story ...
  - The way planners view this is ...
  - The way they would respond ...
  - What is not being talked about ...
  - What is important to understand ...
  - I appreciate that perspective, but my experience has been ...
  - I find it odd how we handle this ...
  - I want to hear your perspective ...
  - There may be counterpoints that need further examination. For instance ...
What to keep
- Photos
- Agendas
- Minutes
- Sign-in Sheets
- Email Lists
- Advertisements
- Social Media Posts
- Make a record ASAP after the event
- Post summaries on website
- Prepare Summary for the Comprehensive Plan Report

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