Create Meaningful Public Engagement

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About Our Speaker

Felicia Donnelly has a master's degree in urban and regional planning and has spent the last 18 years helping communities achieve their vision in Parks and Recreation, planning & transportation in both the public and private sectors. Since 2002, she has served as the Administrative Support Manager for the City of Clearwater and oversees the financial functions (accounting & budgeting) cultural affairs division, volunteer programs, planning, technology, and public relations.

Learning Objectives

- Discover different methods of obtaining community input and feedback.
- Create communication champions for your program or project.
- Identify methods that will allow you to create lasting community investment.

Agenda

- Defined
- Principles
- Levels
- Plan Development
- Basic Facilitation Methods

Participatory Democracy

Basic Principles

- Places decision making to the "people" in terms of policy and political decisions

- Equality

Basic Principles

- Inclusive Planning
- Clarity & Transparency
- Authentic Intent
- Breadth of Participants
- Informed Participants
- Accessibility
- Appropriate Methods
- Evaluation and Use of Information
- Feedback

What do we need in place for success?

- On-going cumulative process to build relationships and trust
- Engagement events need to be planned and executed with this in mind
- Engagement to Marriage

How do we Start?

- Define Project and Purpose
- Process Planning (Organize)
- Identify stakeholders
- Identify level of participation
- Identify methods
- Timely feedback and next steps
- Develop Schedule

Define Purpose and Scope

- Is this for a plan, project, program?
- What is the duration?
- Who will be final decision makers?

Process Planning

Is input appropriate and possible?

Ensure commitment and ability

Identify where public input is needed

Assess skills needed

Identify resources

Stakeholders
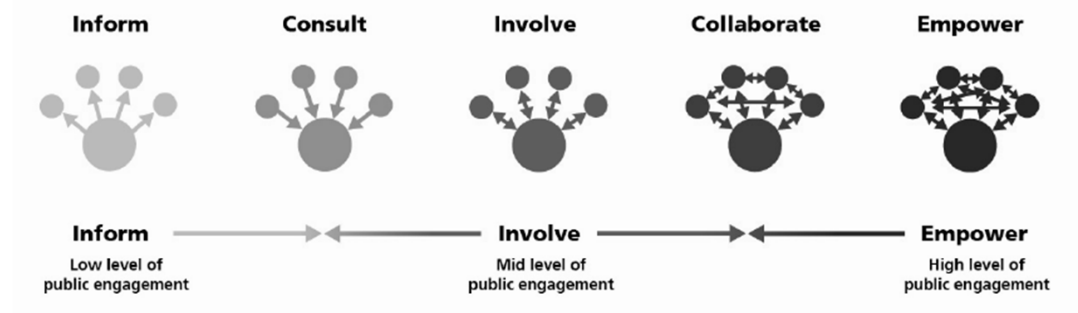
- will be directly/indirectly affected?

- wants to be or is already involved?

- will be upset if not included?

- can affect the outcome?

- can claim a legal or has moral issues that could affect the process?

- has political influence?

- is committed to interest (community/business) groups , and will be responsible for acting as liaison/ leader?

- will be responsible for implementing?

- support is needed to implement?

- could undermine the decision?

- will be committed to following the process, (attending meetings, gathering information, etc.?

Levels of Participation
Engagement Spectrum

Inform

Provide public with objective information to assist in understanding the goals, challenges and solutions

Methods

- In-Person
  - Briefing Meetings (neighborhood, commission, civic/faith-based)
  - Public Meetings

- Hands-Off
  - Printed Information (Fact sheets, letters, post cards, newlestter, utility bills)
  - Press/Media
  - Web based (website, eNews, facebook, twitter, youtube)

Success

- Define your targets and how they are most likely to access and understand

- Information is...
  - high quality
  - consistent
  - timely
  - appropriately targeted
  - clear and easily understood

Consult

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives or recommendations

Methods

- Web based Surveys
- Key Person Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Public Meeting/Hearing
- Open Forum/House
- Community Conversations (in person or web based)
- Street Stalls/Innovation Boards (Festivals)

Success

- Purpose is clear, (what is being consulted on and what is not)
- Define your targets and how they are most likely to access
- Allow enough time to respond to consultation requests.
- Coordinate requests so that you ask only once
- Provide feedback on the results
- Ensure and take into account the views of those consulted
- Present all information simply and clearly.
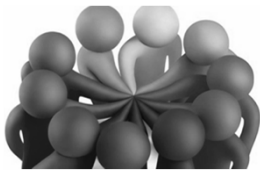- Ensure adequate resources

Involve

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered

Methods

- Stakeholder Committee
- Design Charrettes
- Deliberate Inquiry

Success

- Relevant people are given the opportunity
- Multiple opportunities to participate
- Commitment to their involvement in the process
- Consider carefully what processes are appropriate for the purpose
- Avoid misunderstanding by clearly establishing the basis for membership of bodies such as boards or committees, the decision-making processes (e.g. voting vs consensus) and roles and responsibilities at the beginning

Collaborate

To partner with the public in each aspect of decisions including development of alternatives and identifying solutions

Methods

- Citizen Advisory Committees
- Consensus Workshops (led by Citizen panel)
- Computer Assisted Workshops

Success

- Existing level of trust
- Clarity about the extent of decision-making power that is delegated and, in particular, what is not included.
- Avoid misunderstanding by establishing the basis for membership of bodies such as boards or committees (e.g. skills vs representation), decision-making processes (e.g. voting vs consensus) and roles and responsibilities
- Alignment of core values
- Where formal partnership arrangements are involved, governance arrangements need to be in place

Empower

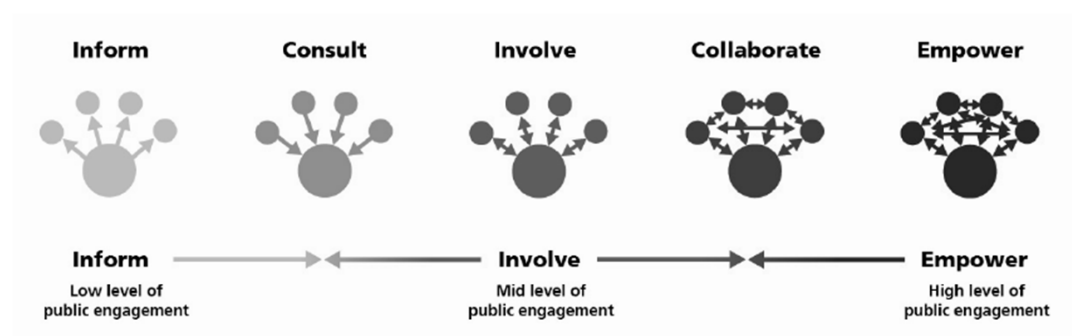## To place final decision making in the people

Methods

- Appointed Board for a specific purpose
- Citizen Juries
- Ballots

Success

- Clarity as to the scope of the shared power and/or decision-making capabilities.
- Clarity about roles and responsibilities.
- Issues involving accountability need to be carefully considered.
- Communities need sufficient resources (human and social capital) to enable an empowerment approach.

Levels of Participation
Engagement Spectrum

Highlighted Methods

- Community Open Houses
- Focus Groups

Community Open Houses

- Public Meeting
- Station Format
- Large in Size
- Drop In (4-8)

Station Format Guidelines

- Brings guest through project station by station

- Staff member with facilitation skills

- Give guest something to identify they have been to each station

- Have to capture

- Has to be interactive
  - Insta-polling
  - Dotmocracy
  - Idea Storms – One words
  - Surveys
  - Share your memory (video/written)
  - Community Mapping

Be Creative and Fun (yet serious)

- Community Map (where do you live?, what do you want to see where?)
- Photography (ask people to bring visual preferences)
- Songs, Poems, Art (made by participants-contest)
- MadLibs
- TV style game shows
- Budget Game
- Project Element Design
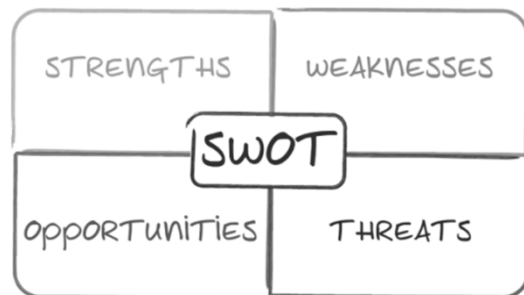- Artist Documentation
- Walkshops, Music, Snacks

(https://www.LiveVotingApp.com/room/frpa

Focus Groups

- Small Groups (6 -10)
- Selected relevant participants
- Two leaders
- Appropriate for programs
- Can be on-going (annual)

Focus Group Guidelines

- Right group
  - Diverse demographics
  - Should be comfortable but not friends
- Facilitator – best to have a neutral one
- Recorder -flip chart and tape
- Well thought out purpose
- Pre-defined Questions
- Very Specific Follow Up

- Notes
- Email
- Website/Facebook
- Phone Call
- Media Release

Questions/Feedback