Building Support: Community Activism Strategy

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EDAW Urban Regeneration and TOD

► Urban design and planning:
  » Mixed-use villages around new stations
  » Infill and development intensification around transit in urban core
  » New corridors
Public Participation for TOD

► Long Beach Citywide Framework
► Downtown San Diego Plan
► Downtown San Diego Parking Plan
► North County Transit District Station Area Plans
► Pomona Infill/TOD Planning
► Imperial Beach Mixed-Use Review
► Claremont Infill Specific Plan
Common Community Reactions to TOD

► Concerns
  » Higher densities
  » Land use mixes
  » Compatibility & integration
  » Parking
  » Conversion of commercial lands

► Opportunities
  » Blight elimination & neighborhood improvement
  » Economic development
  » Housing
  » New/revitalized public spaces & connections
  » Transit access
  » Environmental sustainability
Key to Outreach Success: Strategy

- Project objectives
- Goals for community involvement
- Approach for public participation program
- Techniques
Core Values of Public Participation Approach

- Engaging spectrum of community voices
- Building relationships
- Utilizing established community “infrastructure”
- Defining level of power release by decision makers (or not)
- Addressing community culture
- Committing to open outcomes
- Communicating feasibility constraints
- Balancing process with flexibility
- Making input meaningful via synchronization with process
- Focus at policy/conceptual level
Engaging Spectrum of Community Voices
Building Relationships

“I don’t care how much you **know** until I know how much you **care**.”
Building Relationships

► Relationships generate
  » Empathy
  » Communication
  » Consensus
Building Relationships

► Filters
  » Past experiences
  » Knowledge
  » Stakeholder perspective
  » Individual background

► Relationships reduce distortion

► Leads to common ground and solutions
Utilizing Community “Infrastructure”

► Community Infrastructure
  » Networks of established organizations
  » Civic and business clubs, PTA, neighborhood groups, faith organizations, advocacy/interest groups, culture/ethnic groups
  » Established communication channels
Utilizing Community “Infrastructure”

► Involve in Outreach Process:
  » Create partners and champions
  » Go out and attend their meetings
  » Materials distribution
    › Piggy-back on their newsletters, e-mail chains, etc.
  » “Road-show” workshop that groups can conduct and prepare summary for you
  » Generating involvement in project activities
Utilizing Community Infrastructure

Benefits to your project and public participation process:

» Build relationships
» Bring in greater diversity of voices from the middle
» Increase number of participants
» Create more responsive project that community support
Techniques for Community Engagement

- Match techniques to
  - Strategy considerations
  - Project goals and issues
  - Community characteristics
  - Budget
Technique Categories

► Advisory committees
► Stakeholder interviews
► Public workshops
► Charrettes
► Visioneering
► Presentations to organizations, clubs, community groups
► Newsletters and information publications
► Working papers
► Youth programs
► Walking tours
► Self-guided tours
► Coffee klatches
► Surveys
► Website
► Media outreach
► Translation and interpretation
► Decision-maker briefings
► Forum with “experts”
► High-tech town hall meetings
► Interactive booths at community events
Public Workshops

► Cautions

» Don’t necessarily advance public participation values
» Tend to not draw voices from the middle
» Too often rely on public speaking
» Expensive
» Can’t say results are representative
» Avoid “open mic”
Techniques

For better workshops: small group activities, multiple input opportunities, reporting back mechanisms, tap into “partners”
Newsletters

► Cautions
  » Expensive
  » Mass mailing: expensive and often not read

► Better
  » Good vehicle for disseminating good information (and avoiding mis-information)
  » Distribute using community infrastructure
  » Design to multi-task for other outreach events
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