

Who Speaks For The Neighborhood?

True community engagement requires dedicating time, energy, and resources to building meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships. Communities are respected as experts who define the problems, design the solutions, and evaluate the outcomes. Authentic community engagement can challenge the status quo and create accessible spaces, projects, and processes that allow community members to feel welcomed as their full selves.



AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Builds Power

Authentic community engagement leverages the power of people of color, indigenous, immigrant, and low-income communities by centering the process on them.

Community engagement must start where the community is at. Because community engagement is based in trust, and poor community engagement results in harmed relationships, quality community engagement starts with healing. Transformative community engagement is not transactional, but rather changes the culture of an institution and its value of community.

Is Relational & Based in Trust

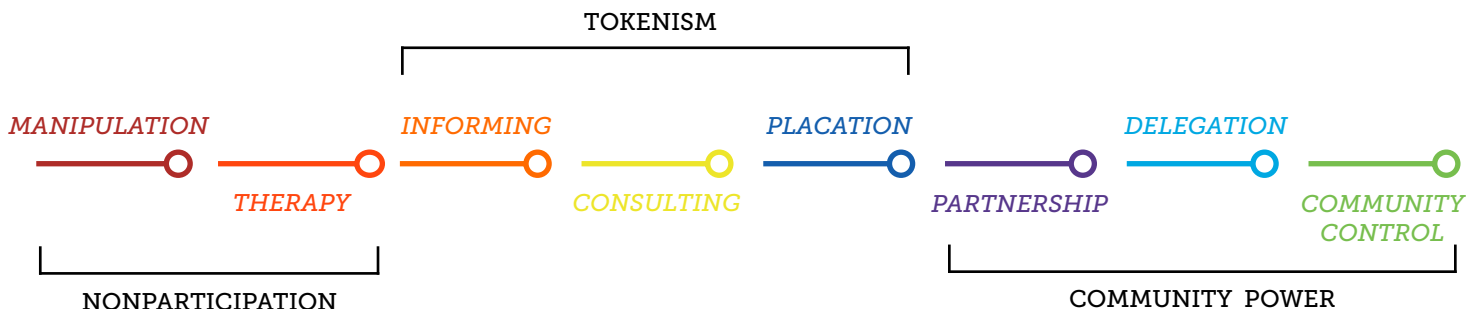
Takes Time & Dedicated Resources

Community engagement is both a professional skill and requires resources; therefore organizations must fund and provide professional development opportunities around community engagement. Public institutions should compensate community leaders who guide, inform, or lead a process.

Authentic community engagement is a healing process that engages with trauma, anger, and tension. Trauma encases personal, historic, and community trauma. Thus, understanding where people are coming from is a recognition of their humanity. A person's trauma showing up during engagement is not a roadblock - it highlights real experiences that can inform and strengthen projects and future engagement. Authentic community engagement sees community as assets and partners to a project.

Is Trauma-Informed

LADDER OF COMMUNITY POWER

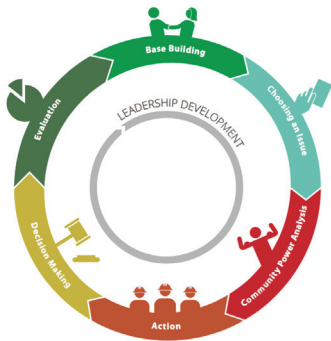


This guide shows which methods of engagement build power and which methods fall short. Adapted from Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Power (1969). https://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation_en.pdf

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How do you create, value, and maintain relationships with community members?
- What real decision-making power do community members have?
- How will community ideas influence the overall process or project?
- What tools will community have to evaluate the process and outcomes?
- How can you be held accountable? Can you honor and incorporate feedback?
- Do your organizational policies and structures support engagement?

RESOURCES



Lifecycle of an Organizing Campaign, Center for Urban & Regional Affairs (CURA)

The Lifecycle of an Organizing Campaign is a tool for organizers and leaders to see the steps in pulling together a successful campaign. The purpose of this tool is for people to see that each step in their organizing is connected to future steps. Authentic, reciprocal, and relational community engagement echos the organizing process, despite not necessarily being campaign-based.

- Malik Holt-Shabazz, shabazmu@umn.edu, <http://www.cura.umn.edu> •
- http://www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantagelabs.com/files/content-docs/Life_Cycle_of_an_Organizing_Campaign.pdf •

Twin Cities Equitable Development Scorecard

This Scorecard was created by Twin Cities community leaders to ensure that the principles and practices of equitable development, environmental justice, and affordability are applied in all communities as they plan for economic development and wealth creation that benefits everyone. The Scorecard is a flexible tool that community members can be repurpose and utilize at every stage of the development process.

- <http://thealliancetc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/EquitableDevelopmentScorecard.pdf> •

Metropolitan Council Public Engagement Plan

The goal of this Metropolitan Council Public Engagement Plan is to make a shift in the planning process from thinking about traditional outreach and participation processes to an engagement model that fosters shared problem solving, supportive partnerships and reciprocal relationships.

- <https://metro council.org/About-Us/Publications-And-Resources/Public-Engagement-Plan.aspx> •

Redeemer Center for Life

Community engagement is at the core of Redeemer Center For Life's organizational culture and the primary source of their vision, strategy and evolution. RCFL provides a range of youth programs, operates 26 units of attainable rental housing, engages in local economic development initiatives, and provides support ranging from Housing in Transition programs to building capacity for homeownership.

- Pastor Kelly Chatman, pastor@redeemerpls.org • <https://www.redeemercenter.org> •

Nexus Community Engagement Institute (NCEI)

Nexus is equipping practitioners and funders with the tools to demonstrate and evaluate the impact of engagement, and growing the field of community engagement by offering training and coaching. Below are links to the Community Engagement Assessment tool and the NCEI resource page with stories of impact, a community engagement impact graphic, and more.

- <http://nexuscp.org/resources/> •
- http://nexuscp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/CEAssessmentTool_7-27-18.pdf •

Frogtown Neighborhood Association SMAPL

SMAPL, a living document and graphic novel, was created by and for community, through healing dinners and by local artists. SMAPL, a Small Area Plan, is an urban planning document that envisions how the Frogtown community would like their neighborhood to evolve over the course of the next decade and beyond.

- Caty Royce, caty@frogtownmn.org •
- <http://www.frogtownmn.org/smapi2/> •