



DESIGNING WITH COMMUNITIES

A framework for a collaborative public engagement process

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Designing with Communities: A Framework for a Collaborative Public Engagement Process

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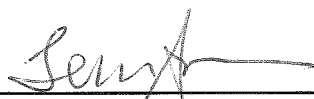
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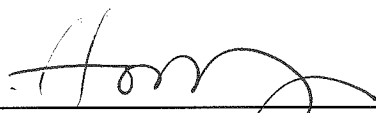
Designing with Communities: A Framework for a Collaborative Public Engagement Process

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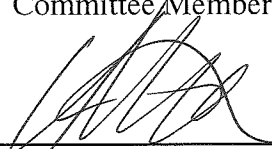
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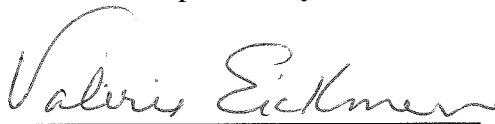


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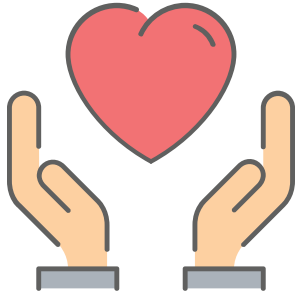


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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	1
1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Research Background	5
1.2 Research Question + Sub-Questions	6
1.3 Justification	8
1.4 Limitations	16
1.5 Conclusion	17
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	19
3. METHODS + DATA ANALYSIS	29
3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 Sensing // Interviews	34
3.3 Data Analysis of Interviews	36
3.4 Understanding // Participatory Design Session	40
3.5 Data Analysis of Participatory Design Session	45
3.6 Framing // Survey of Existing Literature	48
3.7 Ideating // Possible Solutions	50
3.8 Iterating // Testing + Refining	52
4. SOLUTION + CONCLUSIONS	65
4.1 Introduction	67
4.2 Solution: Conceptual Framework	70
4.3 Conclusions	80
4.4 Opportunities for Further Research	81
GLOSSARY	82
REFERENCES	84
APPENDIX	87

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Abstract

This research explores approaches to public engagement processes in the field of Urban Planning, as well as the relationship between Urban Planners and Community Members through that process. A series of interviews was conducted with practicing Urban Planners to determine their current approaches to public engagement, as well as their rationale for using those approaches. Data from the interviews was used to design the objectives and methods for a participatory design session. The participatory design session was held with a group of Urban Planners, Community Advocates, and Community Members as participants. Participants were facilitated through activities to elicit the values each of these groups can offer to the public engagement process, as well as generating ideas for how they might collaborate more effectively. The session was informed by the Asset-based Community Development methodology. Data from literature review, interviews, and the participatory design session were then analyzed and synthesized to generate further insights for development of prototypes for possible solutions. Several iterations of prototypes were created and tested, in order to arrive at a conceptual framework to proceed with designing.

A conceptual framework was created as the solution for this thesis, in order to facilitate Urban Planners in gaining a deeper level of understanding of the opportunities and challenges of involving Community Members through a public engagement process. By more effectively understanding these factors and variables included in the framework, a stronger collaborative relationship might

be developed, to achieve a higher quality of engagement. Doing so would result in a mutually beneficial project for both groups. might be attained for both groups. The intended audience for the framework is Urban Planners who are interested in shifting from a prescriptive approach to a collaborative approach, yet might not know what underlies and contributes to a collaborative approach well enough to make the shift. Going forward, Urban Planners who are interested in making a shift might use the understanding gained from the framework, to develop specific methods and a plan of action for implementing a collaborative approach to public engagement.

1. Introduction



1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Urban planners are generally mandated to inform the public about projects and plans that will be designed for the use of public land, which use public sources of funding and might impact public resources and facilities. In order to do this, Urban Planners will initiate a public engagement process, whereby they should involve the stakeholders who might be impacted by the proposed project. One stakeholder group in a public engagement process is the Community Members who reside in the proposed project area.

Before a public engagement process begins, Urban Planners are often unfamiliar with the community of people they will be engaging. From the outset of a project, this can lead to reliance on the more prescriptive public engagement approaches with which they are comfortable and familiar. However, doing so can alienate Community Members, if the chosen approach is not appropriate for their particular needs, values, beliefs, and community context (Robertson, 2013).

Through this research, it was found that prescriptive public engagement approaches that are currently used in Urban Planning settings are often not appropriate. These more commonly used approaches can be limited in how engaging they are, by simply informing people about projects, rather than being truly collaborative and inclusive of the needs of the Community Members that will be impacted by a project. This perpetuates a long-standing power gap that has existed between Urban Planners and Community Members, in which most

of the project design and decision making power lies with Urban Planners and their governmental agency employers (Robertson, 2013).

This paper frames community at the scale of a local neighborhood within a city, as used in community-based participatory design (Minkler, 2003). It uses this definition of community to examine how a collaborative design approach can be used to foster stronger mutual knowledge, power, and trust, as well as high quality engagement, in order to lead to more mutually beneficial projects. **Collaborative Design** is an approach to collective creativity, in which both designers and non-designers collaborate throughout the span of the design process to create an outcome, product, or service (Sanders, Stappers, 2008). This applies to the public engagement process because Urban Planners are considered designers, Community Members are typically non-designers, and through a collaborative public engagement process they can work to achieve a mutually beneficial project outcome (Teal, French, 2016). In this research, the term collaborative approach will be used instead of collaborative design approach to refer to the proposed approach to public engagement. The term collaborative approach is meant to emphasize that the proposed approach for this research focuses on collaboration between Urban Planners and Community Members in a public engagement process, rather than on proposing that Urban Planners and Community members are co-designing a project solution. The focus is on the process of public engagement itself, not on the design and implementation of a project.

1.2 Research Question

Professionals who work for a public agency, or as a hired consultant on their behalf, to design projects and plans for the use of public land. Planners are also responsible for involving Community Members and other community stakeholders in a public engagement process, in order to inform them about upcoming plans and projects for the use of public land.

Members of the public who are residents and who will be impacted by a project or plan that is initiated by a public agency. The terms Community Members and Public will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

How might **Urban Planners** understand the opportunities + challenges of involving **Community Members** through a **public engagement process**, in order to shift from a **prescriptive approach** to a **collaborative approach**?

A traditional approach to public engagement that is primarily designed and implemented by Urban Planners to inform the public about a plan or project for the use of public land. Prescriptive approaches typically involve the public minimally throughout the process, or very late in the process, towards the final stages of design. The process is driven by Planners without significant public consultation. Community needs and goals are generally not deeply considered or implemented into the final design of the plan or project.

In this research, the term refers to an approach to public engagement that is strongly influenced by Participatory Design. Participatory Design posits that people are the experts of their own experiences, needs, and hopes. People should be actively engaged throughout a process for the design of products or services they will use, to ensure the products or services are appropriate. In this case, the service is the public engagement process, which directly impacts the outcomes of plans or projects for the Community's use of public space.

The process by which Urban Planners engage the Community Members as stakeholders in projects for the built environment or master plans that are initiated by public agencies and will impact public resources, services, or facilities. The extent to which Planners engage Community Members varies based on their selected approach.

1.2 Sub-Questions

- 1 What approaches to public engagement are Urban Planners currently using?
- 2 What are the needs of Community Members in a public engagement process?
- 3 What concepts, factors, and variables are included in a public engagement process?
- 4 How do those concepts, factors, and variables correlate with one another, as well as impact the quality of engagement for both Urban Planners and Community Members?

1.3 Justification

The justification for this research is based upon several factors that continue to have a negative impact upon both Urban Planners and Community Members in public engagement processes. These issues include Urban Planner and Community Members' mistrust of each other, gaps in power, and gaps in knowledge. These factors are examined in depth in the Literature Review section. The thesis seeks to resolve those issues by shifting to a collaborative approach, which can foster mutual respect, trust, and empathy, which can in turn lead to a healthier working relationship that produces stronger outcomes. For the purposes of this paper, the term community is framed at the scale of a local neighborhood within a city. This scale is small enough to be accessible, while large enough to include a diverse set of participants. This research is intended to bridge a gap in the level of appropriateness in the approach that Urban Planners use with Community Members in public engagement settings. It argues against the current, often prescriptive and standardized, approach designers use for the participatory process. In doing so, it looks at the importance of shifting to a framework of public engagement that is more collaborative and higher quality for both Urban Planners and Community Members. Using the proposed framework for public engagement could allow planners to more genuinely honor community member's specific needs, priorities, and values, as well as to balance their own needs in the process. In turn, this could enable them to work together to create more powerful and imaginative outcomes. This section discusses the ways in which a collaborative approach could be used to resolve the current issues with prescriptive approaches.

Collaborative Design

In order to set the way forward, it is necessary to look at how collaborative design principles and approaches have evolved over time. Collaborative design has its roots in Scandinavian participatory design, in which participation of people who were not designers was seen as a way to ensure representative democracy for Nordic welfare states. This tradition began in the 1970's with a focus on user involvement in computer systems design, in order to democratize both the design process and the work life of potential users (Elovaara, et al., 2006). Designers of computer systems involved users (participants) in their design process, to use

and test the systems, as a way to get feedback and improve them (Kvan, 2000). Participatory design has since expanded to include additional levels and scopes of participation. According to the Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Design, the current main guiding principles of participatory design include: equalizing power relations; democratic practices; situation-based actions; mutual learning; tools and techniques; and alternative visions about technology.

Equalizing power relations refers to creating a platform for people who may not have equal power in an organization or community, so they can express their voices. Democratic practices relate with equal power relations, by allowing equal opportunities for action amongst stakeholders. Situation-based actions means that working with people in their workplaces, homes, or communities can allow designers to better understand the context of people's environment and lives. Doing so facilitates the principle of mutual learning, by establishing a common ground from which to work. In this environment, tools and techniques are utilized to enable each participant to express their needs, desires, and vision. Finally, alternative visions about technology can help people develop new expressions and ideas about democracy and equality (Robertson and Simonsen, 2013:33).

Along with participatory design, collaborative design has also expanded to a broader scope. Collaborative design now includes a wider array of design disciplines and has often been termed synonymously with co-design. The term co-design is defined by two pioneers of the field, Elizabeth Sanders and Pieter Jan Stappers, as a collective form of creativity, in which both designers (design facilitators) and non-designers (participants) collaborate throughout the span of the design process to co-create an outcome, product, or service (Sanders, Stappers, 2008).

They frame co-design as a mindset that emphasizes participant experience as a central source for design inspiration. This allows for a more collective approach, wherein everybody has ownership in the process and outcomes (Sanders, Stappers, 2008). The approach is also empathy based, in that it is interpretative of people's human qualities, which allows for more creativity and openness. Currently, in Helsinki, Finland, designers have further highlighted the need for empathy in their approach, which they call empathic design. There are four core

principles to empathic design: sensitivity towards humans, sensitivity towards design, sensitivity towards techniques, and sensitivity towards collaboration. Empathic design uses the everyday lived experiences of people, including their desires, moods, and emotions, as inspiration for their designs (Mattelmäki, Vaajakallio, Koskinen, 2013).

As collaborative design evolves, some researchers are questioning the efficacy and universality of design methods, and whether they truly capture the fullness of people's lived experiences as intended. Dr. Jung-Joo Lee, Assistant Professor of Industrial Design at the National University of Singapore, argues that there is a tendency for many designers to think of methods as easily reproducible and standardized, in order to attain more consistent results, as well as to legitimize the practice of design. Dr. Lee also states that many papers discussing methods do not talk about the process of how methods are designed, and instead simply present the various methods designers currently use. This could mean that many designers are not heeding the value of more deeply reflecting upon their chosen methods, which belies the situational nature of their work. When designers conduct a study to experiment with a method, and that method was successful, they often state in their conclusion that it should be generalized for wide reproduction. However, this is similar to using an objective quantitative approach, which is at odds with the intent of participatory design. A significant reason this design methodology came to be was because designers found quantitative methods did not uncover the richness of immeasurable human qualities that are based in empathy and emotion (Lee, 2014). The contextual framework and subjective nature of participatory design were defining principles of the approach, and moving forward they can continue to serve as a foundational base for practice.

With the continued evolution of collaborative design, there has been a growing trend of practitioners using it as means to affect societal change via community engagement. Designers attempts to practice in this way have frequently been informed by the field of urban planning, which traditionally falls within the discipline of environmental design. However, there is incongruity in the way that some Urban Planners attempt to practice community engagement, which will be discussed further. This has implications on designers seeking to engage the public, or who

wish to use urban planning as inspiration for their methods and practices (Teal, French, 2016).

One notable implication lies in a long held question of urban planning - how can Urban Planners best engage the public in the planning process (Bryson, 2013)? The public in Urban Planning is to the participants in collaborative design. During a public engagement process, Planners have historically presented the public with project or plan alternatives, such as infrastructure projects, shared public spaces, or a city master plan. The public can then submit their feedback about the project and it will be taken into consideration as the design gets refined in further phases. This type of engagement is less of a collaborative dialogue and more of formalized, pre-determined process that is often mediated by government regulations (Teal, French, 2006). Over the course of their practice, some Urban Planners have started finding it counterintuitive to go to a local meeting with a plan and ask the community for their feedback, though. They are realizing that Community Members should be engaged from the very beginning of their efforts. However, Planners are having difficulty reaching and involving many groups of people. They are often unsure of the extent and type of engagement that should occur, as well as which stakeholder groups they should include in public engagement efforts. (Listerborn, 2008). See Figures 1 and 2 for a map of the traditional process of public engagement and the typical stakeholder groups that are included.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH

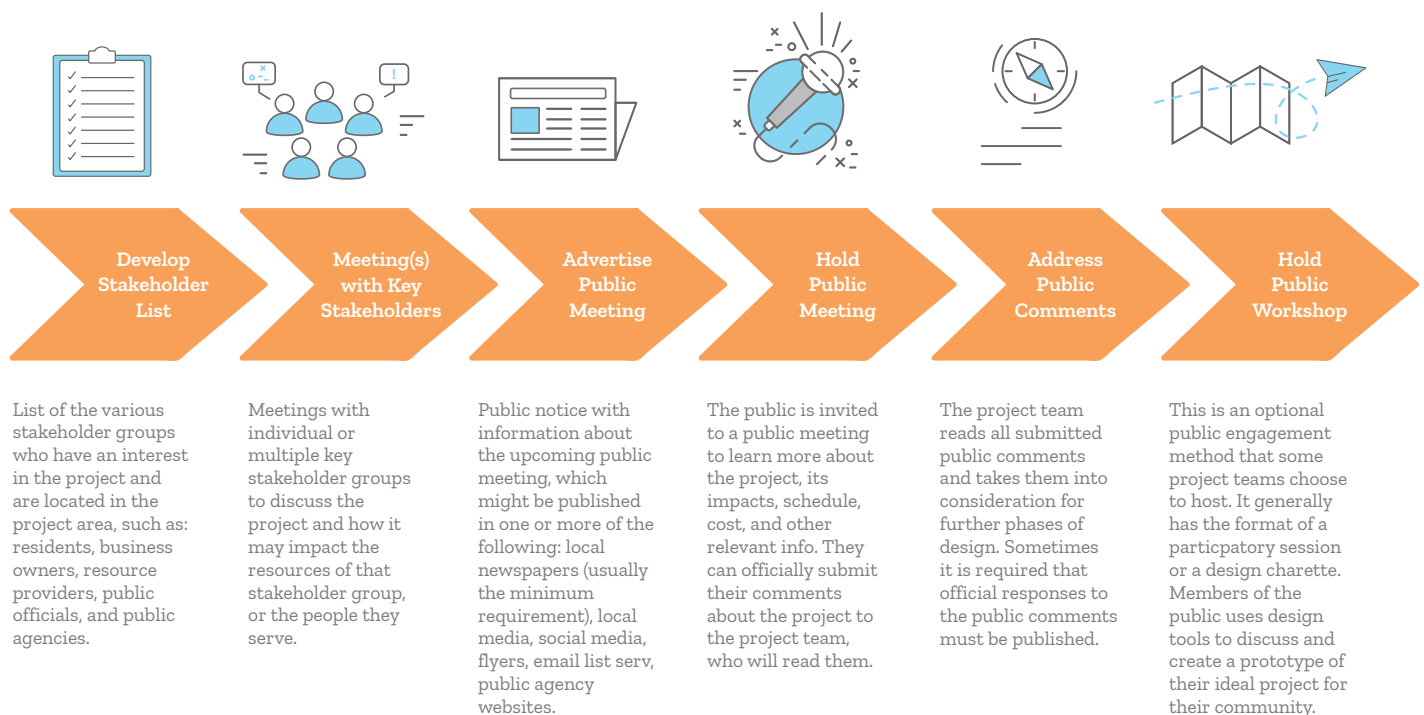


Figure 1: The traditional approach that urban planners use for public engagement.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MAP OF STAKEHOLDERS

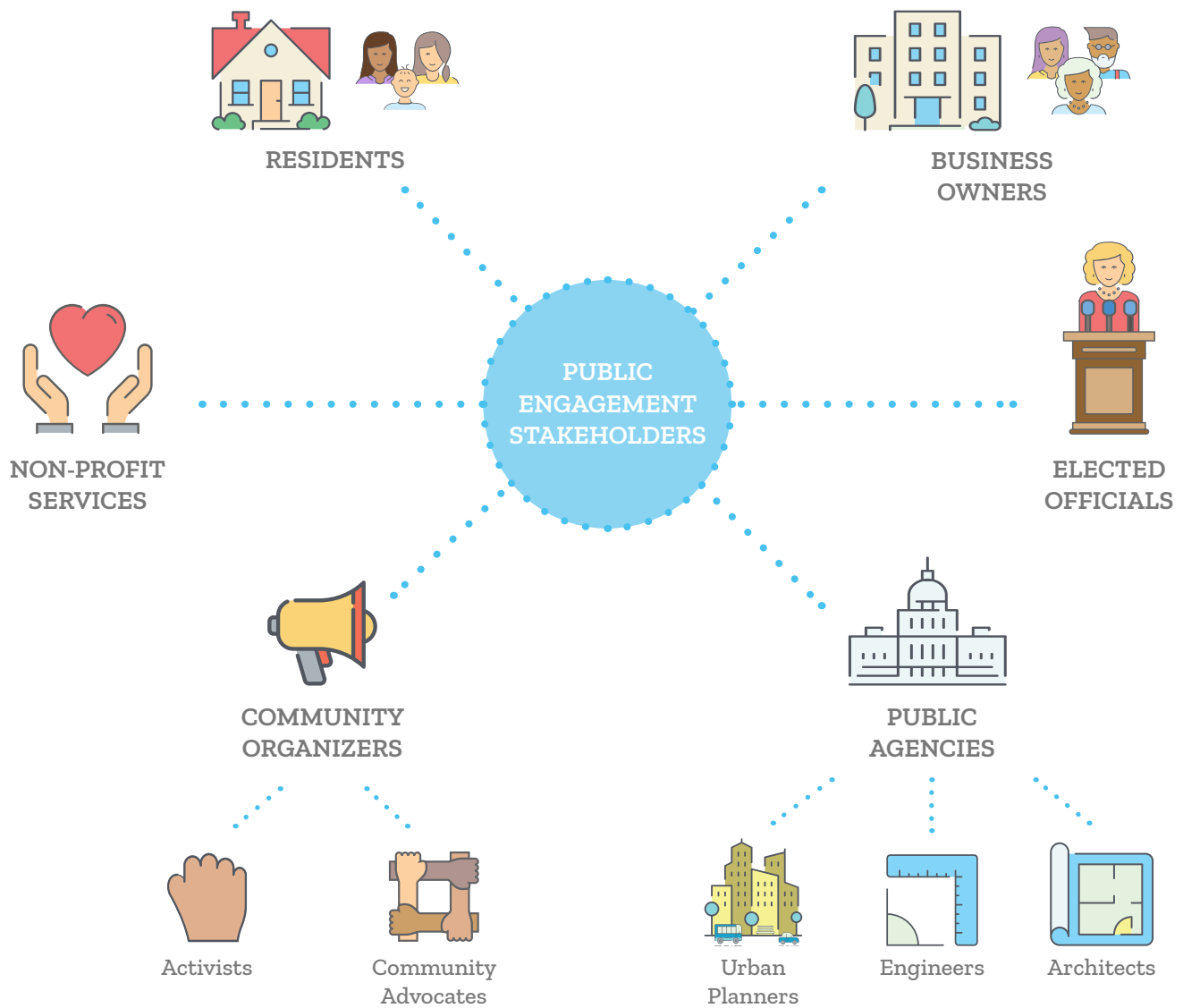


Figure 2: The typical stakeholder groups included in a public engagement process.

Approaches to Public Engagement

There is a spectrum of approaches to public engagement, from prescriptive to empowering, which is outlined by the International Association of Public Participation. On the strictly prescriptive end of the spectrum are the traditional processes of public engagement, wherein the public is only informed on a basic level of the projects and plans that are proposed for the community. Delivery of project information generally occurs through printed literature, websites, social media, and open house meetings. Also on the prescriptive end of the spectrum is when planners solicit feedback from the public about project alternatives and proposed solutions, through a public hearing or survey. Public hearings are a publicly advertised event that invites the community and other stakeholders to hear a presentation about the project. Public Hearings include a question and answer session, in which the community can ask the project team questions about the project and then officially submit their comments about the project. All comments submitted are usually required to be addressed following the public hearing and are published in a public record document. Each of these prescriptive approaches occur in later stages of design, once project alternatives have already been developed by Urban Planners, architects, and engineers. In these approaches, the community has had no prior input in the preliminary stages of design, meaning their needs related to the project might not have been addressed in the designs (International Association of Public Participation).

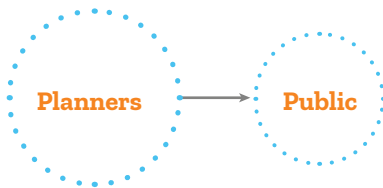
When planners move away from a traditional approach that uses formal public hearings, towards more direct and equitable interactions with Community Members, it can reduce the power differential and marginalization of Community Members (Bryson, et. al, 2013). This is further achieved the more planners move towards the collaborative end of the spectrum of participatory approaches. A reduction in the power differential can begin to occur starting with engaging the public through a design charrette or participatory workshop, where Community Members are involved earlier in the design process. However, design charrettes are still somewhat prescriptive, in that plans have already started to progress and the method is often still primarily feedback based. At a design charrette, the public will typically draw on or mark up existing maps and plans to express their wishes for the project. This feedback may or may

not be incorporated in proceeding design phases (International Association of Public Participation). Approaches to public engagement where the power differential is significantly reduced are when planners partner with the public and empower the public. In partnering with the public, planners will engage the community from beginning stages of design and will include them in decision making about project alternatives and proposed solutions. The community's viewpoints are fully considered throughout the process, by using advisory committees or community advocacy groups to provide oversight. In empowering the public, final project decisions are delegated to the community, through a democratic approach that often includes voting and ballots. For this approach, the community is not only included throughout the process of design, but the final decision making power lies in their hands. In some ways, this style of community engagement is inspired by grassroots approaches to activism. Considering the trend of leveraging participatory design to work towards societal change, this could be an effective method to reduce the power differential. It could also more fully consider the specific needs and contexts of various communities. One of the principles of grassroots activism and social justice approaches is they are created and led by communities, which goes with one mantra of participatory design which emphasizes, "people are the experts of their own experiences" (Sanders, 2008). See Figure 4 for a map of the spectrum of approaches to public engagement.

Prescriptive
Approach

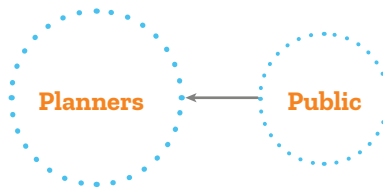


**INFORM
THE PUBLIC**



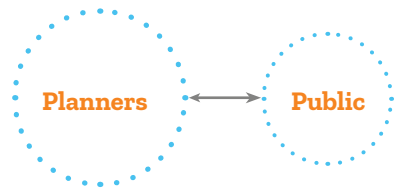
Planners inform the public about the reasons for initiating the project, design alternatives, cost, and schedule.

**GET FEEDBACK FROM
THE PUBLIC**



Planners solicit feedback from the public about the project alternatives, decisions, and proposed solutions.

**ENGAGE
THE PUBLIC**



Planners work directly with the public starting at an earlier phase of the process, in order to understand their needs + desires for their community.

Printed Literature
Websites
Social Media
Open House Meeting

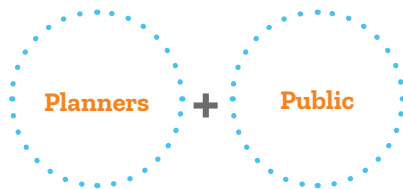
Public Hearing
Surveys

Design Charettes
Participatory Workshops

Figure 4: Spectrum of approaches to public engagement. Adapted from the International Association of Public Participation.

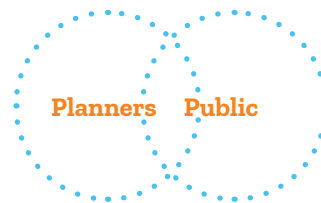
These approaches establish a more meaningful partnership and level of collaboration between planners and the public. They put both groups on a more equal footing, which can reduce the power gap between them. Much of the decision making power gets put into the hands of the people whose communities will be the most impacted by projects.

**PARTNER WITH
THE PUBLIC**



Planners partner with the public in some aspects of decision making, like project alternatives + preferred solutions. Planners take public views into consideration for their decisions.

**EMPOWER
THE PUBLIC**



Planners give the power for final project decisions to the public, so they become the decision makers. Planners agree to implement whichever solution the public chooses.

*Advisory Committees
Community Advocacy Groups*

*Ballots
Delegated Decisions*

Community Advocacy and Equity Planning

Both advocacy planning and equity planning are approaches that have similar objectives to social justice activism, and were developed based on critiques to traditional planning approaches.

Advocacy Planning seeks to have Urban Planners democratize the process of urban planning by working on behalf of communities that have been underrepresented. It also posits that communities should be given resources that will help them understand the technical aspects of planning, in order to be able to offer appropriate feedback. In this approach, resources should generally be provided to communities by planners themselves (Ross, Leigh, 2000). Following advocacy planning, the approach of equity planning was developed.

Equity Planning expands upon advocacy planning, by proposing development of policies to redistribute public resources, power, and participation to underrepresented groups. In this approach, the planner's role is less of a technical expert, in favor of a steward who promotes social responsibility and balance of power. Equity planning recognizes that involving underrepresented groups can more effectively ensure that all citizens can meet their basic needs. It also recognizes that specific policies must be both made and implemented so redistribution of power can occur (Krumholz, 1997).

Conclusion

The studies illustrated in this section show that various types of designers, including Urban Planners, often use industry standard approaches and methods. However, their outcomes and challenges show that this wide application of approaches is often not appropriate when engaging people. The question arises then, how can Urban Planners understand what is appropriate for each context, especially if they regularly work with various communities? What are the more effective ways for planners to understand a community, before deciding upon the approach that will be used? Doing so would allow Community Members to more fully express themselves in the process and could result in more beneficial solutions. Therefore, a framework is proposed that will benefit both Urban Planners and Community Members in public engagement settings, by shifting towards a more collaborative approach with a focus on higher quality engagement.

1.4 Limitations

There are various limitations that set the boundaries for this research. This includes constraints set up by the researcher to focus the research context appropriately, as well as external constraints which the researcher did not have control over. Constraints set up by the researcher are discussed below and relate to the theoretical framework, research setting, problem space, intended audience, criteria for participants, and methodology. External constraints include the length of time allotted to conduct the research, as well as available resources to conduct the research.

Action research was conducted between Urban Planners, Community Advocates, and Community Members using a participatory design approach. Urban planners, community advocates, and Community Members were recruited from various neighborhoods in Indianapolis for feasibility due to proximity to the research location. The limitations of this research are that, due to constraints of time and available resources, action research was only conducted by interviewing Urban Planners and conducting one participatory design session with Urban Planners, community advocates, and Community Members. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and the participatory design session was two hours in length. Interviews and the participatory design session occurred in Spring 2018.

Due to constraints in available resources to recruit participants, the research was not conducted with various groups of planners, community advocates, and Community Members, nor was research conducted outside of the Indianapolis region. The participatory design methods used were intended to be adapted to various urban planning settings and regions, but during the course of the research, they were not able to be tested and evaluated outside the context of the research setting. The solutions and tools developed in this research are intended for use in professional urban planning settings. Therefore, it is outside the scope of this research to evaluate whether they would be appropriate or effective in other professional fields.

The focus of the action research is limited to exploring and generating solutions for the research question of - How might Urban Planners understand the complex relationships between the practices, opportunities, and challenges of

involving Community Members throughout a public engagement process, in order to shift from a prescriptive approach to a collaborative approach? This research question was arrived at through an in-depth literature review of existing problems in the approaches that Urban Planners use in public engagement processes, as well as the current approaches used by other types of designers who use participatory and collaborative design methods with communities. The contextual setting of the research is public engagement processes and methods in the field of urban planning. The research does not examine the actual design or implementation of the plans or projects for the use of public land, nor does it focus on specific types of plans or projects for the use of public land.

An important facet of the research is the power differential between Urban Planners and the Community Members they engage, whereby planners hold a higher position of authority and power. This can negatively impact the level and quality of engagement with Community Members, including the methods and approach that are used by Urban Planners. One intent of this research is to develop a framework that seeks to reduce the power differential between planners and Community Members, by being more collaborative and empowering of the community in the approach to public engagement. Therefore, it specifically focuses on the relationship between Urban Planners and Community Members. As such, other groups of people who might be involved in a public engagement process were not included in this research. This research does not study the relationship between Urban Planners and other stakeholder groups, such as businesses, non-profit organizations, social service providers, and elected officials. These other stakeholder groups have additional sets of needs and challenges that were not examined. Therefore, the solution and conclusions developed in this research might not be fully applicable to other stakeholder groups that are included in public engagement.

1.5 Conclusion

This Introduction section outlines the foundations for this thesis research. It discusses the research problem and research questions, as well as a justification for the relevancy and significance of the research. Additionally, it sets the limitations and boundaries of the research context. The remainder of this document includes a literature review, in depth description of the research methods that were developed and used, and an analysis of the data collected. Finally, it presents a solution to the research problem, final conclusions, and opportunities for further research.



2. Literature Review



2. Literature Review

Introduction

Some researchers have challenged the universal applicability of traditions that are based in Scandinavian participatory design (Sabiescu, David, van Zyl, Cantoni, 2014). Sabiescu, et al. state that collaborative design happens with a present time focus and is heavily community-based. They feel that designers and the communities they engage can co-create tools and techniques that are directly applicable to the context in which they are currently working. Urban Planners have a long history in the discipline of design, generally considered to work within the more specific design field of environmental design. One of the main responsibilities of the Urban Planning profession is to design plans and projects for the use of public land. Additionally, for each of the projects or plans they work on, a plan is designed for engaging the public.

The Urban Planner must be able to facilitate the process, methods, and objectives in a way participants will understand and appreciate, in order for them meaningfully engage. The goal is to attain higher quality engagement, in order to set the foundation for more meaningful collaboration between Urban Planners and Community Members through the process. However, there are many barriers that have historically and currently impede Urban Planners' and Community Members' ability to engage collaboratively. These include public mistrust of urban planners, power differential, gender-based discrimination, institutional racism, planners' prioritization of objectivity over subjectivity, and planners' mistrust of the public. Following is an analysis of how each of these barriers relate to public engagement and Urban Planning.

Public Mistrust of Urban Planners

One of the main factors that contributes to the difficulty of engaging communities is a history of mistrust that Community Members have towards Urban Planners, as well as mistrust that Urban

Planners have towards Community Members. Public mistrust of Urban Planners has been widely documented and examined in the literature, with two of the most prevalent sources being gender-based discrimination and institutional racism (Listerborn, 2008; Ross, Leigh, 2000). Urban Planners' mistrust of Community Members often stems from a fear that they will lose their professional relevancy if the public becomes too powerful (Duarte, 2014). Each of the sources of mistrust prevent or limit peoples' capacity to be involved meaningfully in a public engagement process, and will be examined in the following paragraphs.

Power Differential

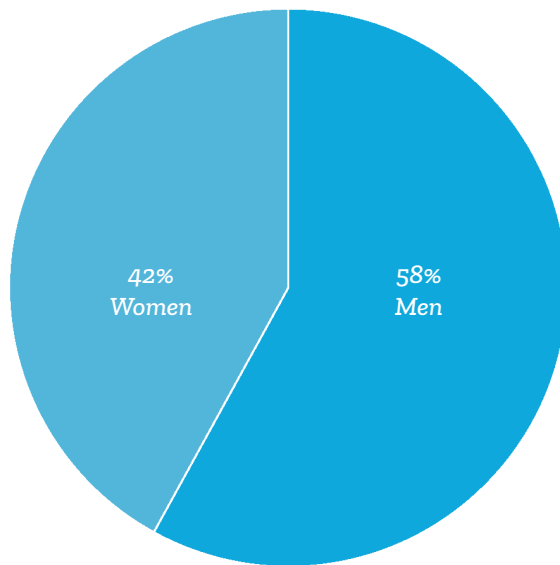
Power Differential is the additional level of role power had by people in positions of authority (Barstow, 2008). Since Urban Planners are employed directly within government agencies, or are hired consultants acting on behalf of government agencies, they hold a position of authority when engaging with the public. This is especially true when members of the public belong to marginalized populations. Planners have historically abused this power differential to control the public engagement process and exclude people from participating (Ross, Leigh, 2000). Following is a discussion of two examples of this abuse of power.

Gender-based Discrimination

The first source of public mistrust towards planners that will be examined is gender-based oppression, which lies in the power differential between Urban Planners, whom are predominantly cisgender men and members of the public who are trans and members of the public who are cisgender women. Cisgender is a term for someone who identifies their gender according to the biological sex they were assigned at birth, according to what society has deemed a gender binary, in which only two binary genders are recognized as legitimate: woman or man. They are referred to, then, as cisgender women and cisgender men (TSER, 2018).

Per the most recent data on the Urban Planning profession, 58% of practicing Urban Planners are men.

(APA, 2016)



**2016 Gender Demographics
of Practicing Urban Planners**

Figure 5: American Planning Association 2016 Survey of Planners

This is only slightly down from 2014, when 62% of practicing Urban Planners were men (APA, 2014). Trans is a term for people whose gender identity does not align with the gender that society recognizes as corresponding with the biological sex they were assigned at birth. The biological sex (female, male, or intersex) that one is assigned at birth is generally designated based on physical anatomy and chromosomal makeup. A few of the many gender identities that can be considered trans include: trans woman, trans man, agender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, genderqueer, genderflux, and genderfluid. Not all gender diverse people choose to self-identify as trans, so special consideration should be made so gender diverse individuals can identify themselves and use their own terminology (TSER, 2018). While cisgender women have more societal privilege than trans people, cisgender women have historically experienced and continue to experience oppression based on patriarchal norms, and so will be included with trans people in this discussion (Green, 2006).

Mistrust that trans and gender non-conforming people have towards Urban Planners can be based on a fear for their safety, as well as a lack of their livelihood being considered throughout both public engagement and design. There is little support from politicians, who neglect writing and passing trans positive legislation, and in many cases actively work to exclude trans people. Being excluded at the higher legislative level can feed into exclusion at local institutional levels of government. The American city has been planned and designed based on society's perceived right for cisgender men to dominate occupation of public space. This has been at the expense of the safety and well being of trans and gender non-conforming people, and their right to occupy and flourish in public space (Doan, 2007). There is an increasing level of knowledge that violence against trans people is a significant problem. Some sources of information about violence and harassment against trans people are: self-reporting surveys; hotline calls and social services; and police reports (Stotzer, 2009).

In 2016, over 200 anti-LGBTQ bills were introduced and hate crimes against trans people rose 239% between 2013 and 2015 (Langowski, 2017).

Dr. Carina Listerborn, Professor of Urban Planning and Design at Malmö University in Sweden, examines various power dynamics, arguing that one of these dynamics is in how male planners have typically kept women participants on the fringes of their efforts. She states that due to prejudices and stereotypes where gender are concerned, many male planners view women as difficult to involve. Based on traditionally instituted gender roles, they perceive men as belonging more readily to public spaces, while they see women as occupying private spaces (Listerborn, 2008). Additionally, women have been stigmatized as being overly emotional, irrational, and subjective, whereas the field of planning utilizes defined, rational, and measurable knowledge. Male planners can then view women's input as less credible compared to the perception that their own work is more objective (Snyder, 1995). This bias often results in women being excluded or minimized throughout public engagement efforts (Listerborn, 2008).

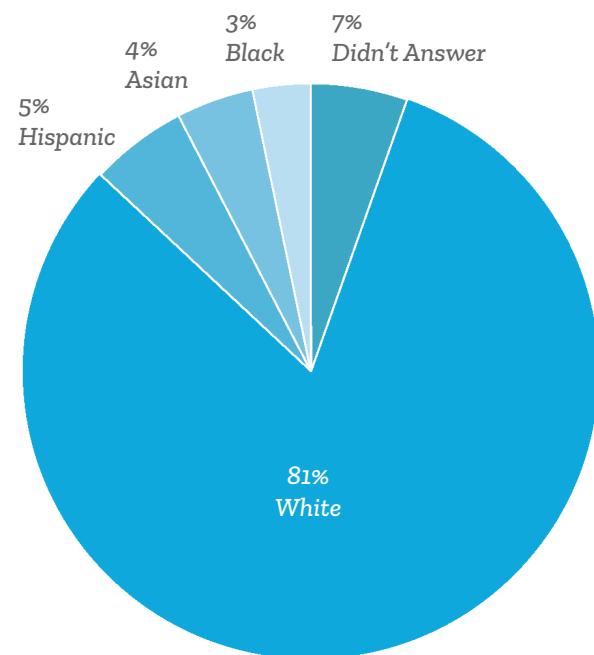
Institutional Racism in Urban Planning

In addition to gender-based discrimination, institutional racism is one of the most prevalent means of discriminatory planning that results from a power differential. As such, institutional racism is a major source of public mistrust that people of color have towards urban Urban Planners. This is because the overwhelming majority of the profession is comprised of white Urban Planners.

Per the most recent survey data on the Urban Planning profession, 81% of practicing Urban Planners are White.

Only 5% of Urban Planners are Hispanic, 4% are Asian, and 3% are Black.

There were 7% of survey respondents who did not answer this question (APA, 2016).



**2016 Racial Demographics
of Practicing Urban Planners**

Figure 6: American Planning Association 2016 Survey of Planners

The term institutional racism was first published by Kwame Ture (formerly known as Stokely Carmichael) and Charles V. Hamilton in their 1968 book, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. It should be noted that in order to understand the definition of institutional racism, it is also necessary to introduce the authors' definition of individual racism. The book is such a seminal work that Ture and Hamilton's definitions of **Individual Racism** and **Institutional Racism** are quoted directly in the following passage:



"Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be recorded by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first type.

When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of society. But when in that same city—Birmingham, Alabama—five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, shelter and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutional racism. When a black family moves into a home in a white neighborhood and is stoned, burned or

routed out, they are victims of an overt act of individual racism which many people will condemn—at least in words. But it is institutional racism that keeps black people locked in dilapidated slum tenements, subject to the daily prey of exploitative slumlords, merchants, loan sharks and discriminatory real estate agents. The society either pretends it does not know of this latter situation, or is in fact incapable of doing anything meaningful about it. We shall examine the reasons for this in a moment.

Institutional racism relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices. A sense of superior group position prevails: whites are "better" than blacks; therefore blacks should be subordinated to whites. This is a racist attitude and it permeates the society, on both the individual and institutional level, covertly and overtly.

'Respectable' individuals can absolve themselves from individual blame: they would never plant a bomb in a church; they would never stone a black family. But they continue to support political officials and institutions that would and do perpetuate institutionally racist policies. Thus acts of overt, individual racism may not typify the society, but institutional racism does—with the support of covert, individual attitudes of racism."

Following Ture and Hamilton's book, the terminology for institutional racism in the United States has generally expanded to include racially marginalized groups in addition to African American people, such as Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and Middle Eastern people. Drs. Catherine L. Ross and Nancey Green Leigh, Professors of City and Regional Planning at Georgia Institute of Technology, discuss **Structural Racism**, which is often used interchangeably with institutional racism, and is defined as—societal structures and institutions that may be overtly or subtly racist in their conception or have inherently racist outcomes, even if those outcomes were not part of their stated original design or intent (Ross, Leigh, 2000).

As mentioned, institutional racism in modern day planning goes back to the early 20th century. Segregationist zoning was commonly occurring throughout the United States at the time. In 1913, the City of Atlanta passed a racial zoning ordinance that assigned a zoning classification to every city block based on the race of the majority of people living on the block. Based upon this zoning ordinance, black people were forbidden from living on blocks that were zoned for white people. This ordinance was overtly racist. Lawmakers said it was to prevent close association and interaction of black and white people, since they thought such association would result in immoral behavior, health risks, and disturbance of peace. Similarly, in Baltimore, the mayor stated that he felt black people should be quarantined to slums to prevent disturbance and the spread of diseases into white neighborhoods, as well as to protect property values for white residents (Schindler, 2015).

In 1917, the Supreme Court heard the case of *Buchanan v. Warley* on racial zoning ordinances. In the case, William Warley, a black home buyer, made an offer to purchase a home owned by Charles Buchanan in a zoned white neighborhood of Louisville, Kentucky. Buchanan accepted Warley's offer on the home, and Warley argued that he could not complete the purchase due to a racial zoning ordinance that existed. Buchanan went on to sue the City on the grounds that the racial zoning ordinance was unconstitutional based upon the Fourteenth Amendment. The case went to the Supreme Court and it was decided that racial zoning was unconstitutional, thereby making racial zoning ordinances illegal in Kentucky (245 U.S. 60, 1917). However, the decision did not stop other types

of racial zoning practices from occurring. Most of the racial zoning practices that occurred before *Buchanan v. Warley* were implemented using city ordinances. Following the Supreme Court decision, cities began hiring professional Urban Planners to develop racially based land use plans and to use the whole of the urban planning process to segregate black communities. Even though the land uses were not legally enforced, they further swayed white members of the public and real estate developers to segregate cities into areas that were deemed unacceptable for black people. This gave way to a broader trend of race-based comprehensive plans that would dictate vital aspects of city life, including land use, transportation, civic improvements, public open spaces, business districts, and residential districts (Silver 1997).

Indeed, it was not only zoning that was misused by Urban Planners to implement segregationist plans. Transportation planning has also been widely misused for the same purposes. Urban planners and highway engineers have historically routed highways through central districts of the city, in order to destroy low-income and black neighborhoods. It was seen as yet another way for white planners to reshape the spatial environment of American cities into their own living model of separate white and black societies. Bridge exits are also often located to route traffic away from wealthier predominantly white communities into lower income communities whose residents are disproportionately people of color. Designed in 1933, the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge, which crosses the East River from Queens to Manhattan, makes a hard right turn north, so traffic lets off in Harlem, not on the Upper East Side. The designed exit location is actually less convenient and efficient for traffic flow, as most traffic using the bridge comes from and heads to areas below 100th Street. This exit location was chosen to accommodate the wealthy Upper East Side residents' preference, while disregarding the residents of Harlem. The bridge plans did not explicitly state they were racially motivated. Yet the increased traffic flow, environmental pollution, and splitting of neighborhoods impacts the people living in Harlem, while other non-discriminatory alternatives could have been considered at the time (Schindler, 2015). Again, as Ross and Leigh state, structural racism occurs when the outcomes of institutionalized conceptions are racist, even if those outcomes were not part of the stated original design or intent (Ross, Leigh, 2000).

It is critical to emphasize that many of the plans and designs of early 20th century urban planning continue to affect American cities today. Although explicitly delineated boundaries that segregate communities are no longer legal, implied racial boundaries remain, thereby perpetuating institutional racism and its harmful impacts upon communities of color. One example of this is the perception white residents have that areas of the city—where the residents are often economically disadvantaged and/or people of color—are dangerous and undesirable “ghettos” or the “inner city” (Beebejaun, 2006). Presently, the “inner city” is not treated as integral to a metropolitan area, nor as within a network of regional economies. Instead it is treated as a different, independent economy that the “rest” of the city has no part in, nor responsibility to care for (Ross, Leigh, 2000).

Objectivity and Subjectivity

Considering the gendered and racial biases in Planning, the issue raised earlier of objective methods being used in subjective situations can be re-visited here. If Planners choose an objective methodological approach, whose sense of objectivity is being referenced? It seems the word “subjective” might be used pejoratively in this case, in referring to women and minorities, by favoring the perceived objectivity of Urban Planning over a person’s subjective experience. Each person in a community can have their own valid subjective experiences and positions, so viewing a lack of objectivity as an impediment to the process creates an unfounded problem. Then an objective approach is not necessarily appropriate when working with the public, whose needs, livelihoods, and environments are largely subjective. Each planning project is subject to widely varying designs and community contexts, so the nature of the work itself and the people involved are not objective and repeatable.

Urban Planners’ Mistrust of the Public

As detailed above, there has been extensive literature written about sources of public mistrust towards Urban Planners. However, there is a limited amount of literature which examines the mistrust that many Urban Planners have towards the public. A majority of the examples showing that planners are mistrustful of the public comes from interviews, in person stories, op-ed articles, blogs, and internet forums.

The “angry and difficult public” is a well known archetype in the field that planners have used to describe citizen participation. Before a public meeting, many planners assume that Community Members will shout their opposition to the project and criticize them for not fulfilling the community’s wishes. This gets exacerbated when the project being presented is high profile, has a high level of impact, and/or is controversial. Planners are commonly apprehensive about engaging with the public due to this archetype. A feature article on this topic, titled “Dealing with an Angry Public,” was written by planner Debra Stein in 2000 and was published in the Planning Commissioners Journal. The article title itself suggests an animosity, in that the public is an objectified whole that planners must put up with. In the body of the article, Stein talks about tactics to avoid making the public angry and how to prevent disruption of the process. While there are suggestions for proper communication, much of the article is guided on managing public behavior, and less so on truly addressing the sources of public anger. For example, she suggests using name tags for the public and writes, “You can minimize aggressive behavior by making it easier to identify individuals and hold them responsible for their own anti-social actions.” When discussing listening tactics, it shifts again to managing, in saying planners can try to understand why the public is upset to find useful information for the planning board. Thus the information is intended to be useful for the planning board, but does not specify how it would be useful, nor acknowledge how planners’ knowledge of that information might in turn mitigate the underlying issues (Stein, 2000).

In an op-ed article on the Planetizen website, titled “The Fall of Planning Expertise,” planner Reuben Duarte discusses how planners’ long range efforts, for projects they felt would be game changers, can be altogether stopped by public opposition. The article explores the ways in which planners feel their profession is being undermined by the public. Duarte argues that people have overwhelmingly lost respect for planning experts. He states that many people prioritize their experiential knowledge of being a Community Member that often occupies public space. He does not argue against public participation, but does state that this same participation has turned into a battle of who has the final say and expertise in planning. While it is true that the engineering and design of planning projects takes significant practice based, regulatory, and theoretical expertise, he perceives the public

thinks their opinion of a project and democratic involvement equate to superseding the planners' expertise. Behind this public attitude is a societal trend that such a level of expertise is elitist and arrogant. There is an example of a member of the public deriding a project because they have lived in the area for fifteen years, and so know better than the planners what is best for that neighborhood. Duarte concludes that even while planners should recognize their own humility, the public should also recognize that, "experts will likely be correct more often than a community member with no background in the field" (Duarte, 2014).

Duarte's argument appears to be based upon what he perceives as a duality that splits planners' professional knowledge and the public's lived experiences and needs. These are not inherently oppositional issues, though. They are both forms of knowledge, in different, yet not competing domains— technical for planners; and experiential for the public. In the article, a higher value judgement is placed on the specific type of knowledge that planners possess. However, in a collaborative approach, which is to say less dualistic, these two forms of knowledge could work in concert to develop a stronger outcome for both groups.

Design Approaches

In a collaborative design approach, designers use an array of methods and tools to engage with participants throughout the design process. Jung-Joo Lee notes that methods in the fields of collaborative design and co-design are different than science-based methods, which do not accurately capture people's everyday lived and emotional experiences. Collaborative design methods are generally qualitative, which means they are concerned with the various qualities of people's experiences. Scientific methods are typically quantitative, which means they are more concerned with measurements and quantities of data (Lee, 2014). Elizabeth Sanders developed a map that shows design approaches and mindsets along intersecting dimensions. The bottom half of the map shows design from a research-led approach and the top half of the map shows a design-led approach. The left side of the map shows an Expert Mindset, in which participants are more like a research subject. The right side shows a Participatory Mindset, in which participants are partners in the design process (Sanders, 2008). See Figure 7 below.

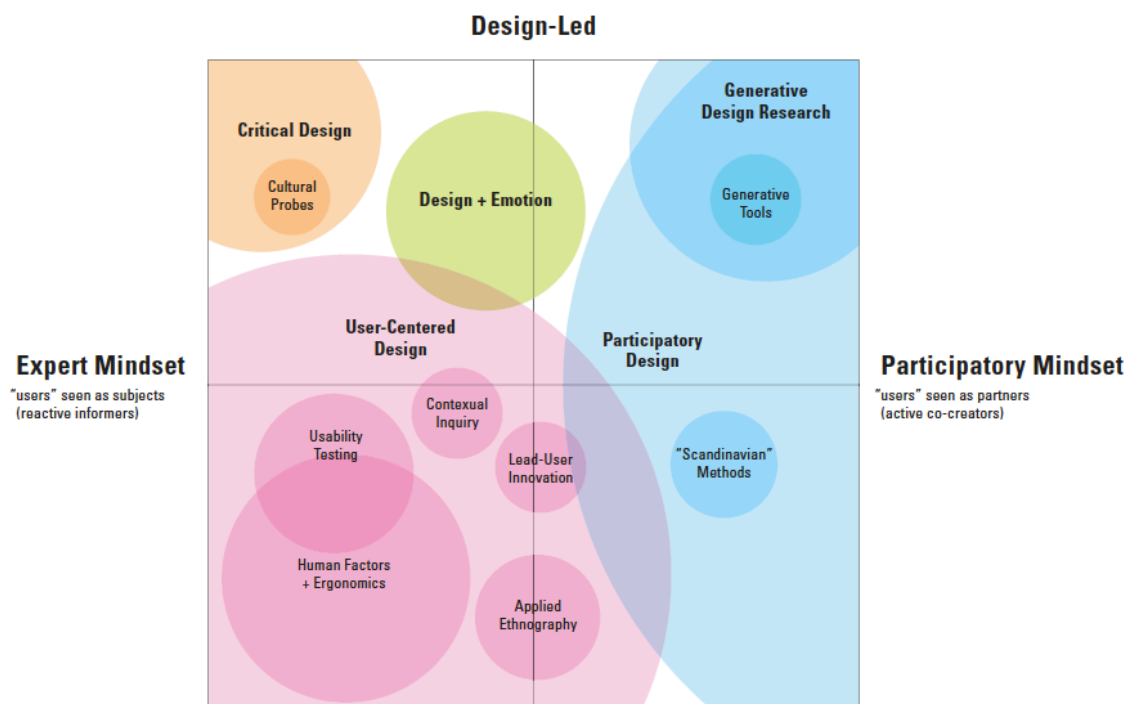


Figure 7: Map of people-centered design & development of products and services (Sanders, 2008)

Scandinavian Methods, as was mentioned, sit within the larger circle of Participatory Design. More specifically, they fall within the Research-Led and Participatory Mindset quadrant. This means that Scandinavian Methods involve participants to the extent possible, with the intent of uncovering new knowledge and furthering research in the field of design. One implication of this is that while participants contribute to the design process, their involvement is more in service to the designer's own research questions and goals. That is not to say this is a negative objective, as a strong body of research is necessary for a discipline to thrive. However, it is often not the most appropriate methodology to use, as will be discussed further.

The top left exhibits an Expert Mindset with a Design Led approach. Within the circle of Critical Design is a popular tool amongst designers, inspired by ethnography, called cultural probes. They were introduced to the design field by Gaver, Dunne, and Pacenti in their seminal paper titled, Cultural Probes (1999). These probes are a set of tools that help designers become familiar with a new culture, usually at the start of a project. They allow designers to get to know the participants by having them use a set of provided materials, so they can engage in making, showing, and telling activities. Gaver, Dunne, and Pacenti's cultural probe is a clear envelope package that includes postcards with images on the front and a set of relevant questions on the back; maps that participants can use when exploring their environment, to mark specific zones of interest based on a prompt; a disposable camera for participants to take photos while going about their daily life; and a booklet with a set of photos for participants to use to write a story. Gaver and colleagues noted that using a cultural probe with their participants gave them with meaningful information that both helped influence their designs and situate them in the context of the local culture. They also stated the main advantage of the method was that the probes were designed especially for the participants they were working with. This gave more authenticity to the method, allowing them to capture deeper and more insightful responses from the participants about their daily lives and environment.

The top right quadrant shows a Participatory Mindset with a Design Led approach called Generative Design Research. This methodology mostly overlaps with the larger Participatory Design circle. Generative Design Research engages

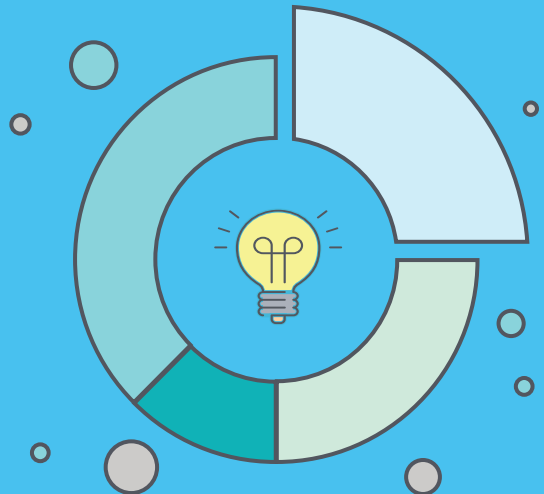
participants by using generative tools, which are tools that help participants visually communicate their ideas. It allows people to translate abstract ideas into a more tangible form, often through cultural probes, drawing, crafts supplies, and visual storytelling. This generative approach helps participants envision their dreams and insights at the ambiguous beginning stages of the design process (Sanders, 2008).

One example of a model that uses generative tools is Finnish empathic design, which was mentioned earlier. In the Finnish empathic design model, methods were initially based in co-design scenarios with participants and stakeholders. These methods have evolved into a more recent focus on imaginative game design, using creative reality twists, as a way to discover how people navigate complex design scenarios (Mattelmäki, et al., 2013). The empathic design process allows designers and participants to have a dialogue, so they can jointly make sense of participant behavior and creative outputs. In doing so, designers can more clearly see how participants experience and view the world. In this process, designers have more of a subjective position compared to participants, instead of a more objective researcher role (Lee, 2014). Designers using empathic design are now drawing a great deal of inspiration from the creative expressions of the art world, and are continually seeking to look at new design challenges and research questions (Mattelmäki, et al., 2013).

2.5 Conclusion

Each of the barriers presented have a negative impact upon the ability for Urban Planners and Community Members to meaningfully engage with one another. Mistrust has a strong correlation with power gaps, which acts to inhibit peoples' access to the process and disproportionately impacts people who belong to marginalized populations. Power gaps also make it difficult for people to understand how the process of engagement actually works, and what type of feedback is needed in the process. The next section on Methodology and Data Analysis discusses the participatory research methods that were used in this research. Participatory research was conducted to gather additional data, in order to develop a conceptual framework that is intended to resolve the issues presented here.

3. Methodology + Data Analysis



3. Methodology + Data Analysis

3.1 Introduction

Action research was conducted with participants from February to March 2018. Analysis of the data collected from action research was ongoing from February to April 2018. A people-centered design approach was used to develop and conduct the methods for action research, as well as the methods for data analysis. The design process that was used in this research is a process model that was developed by Collabo Creative in 2015. It is shown below in Figure 8.

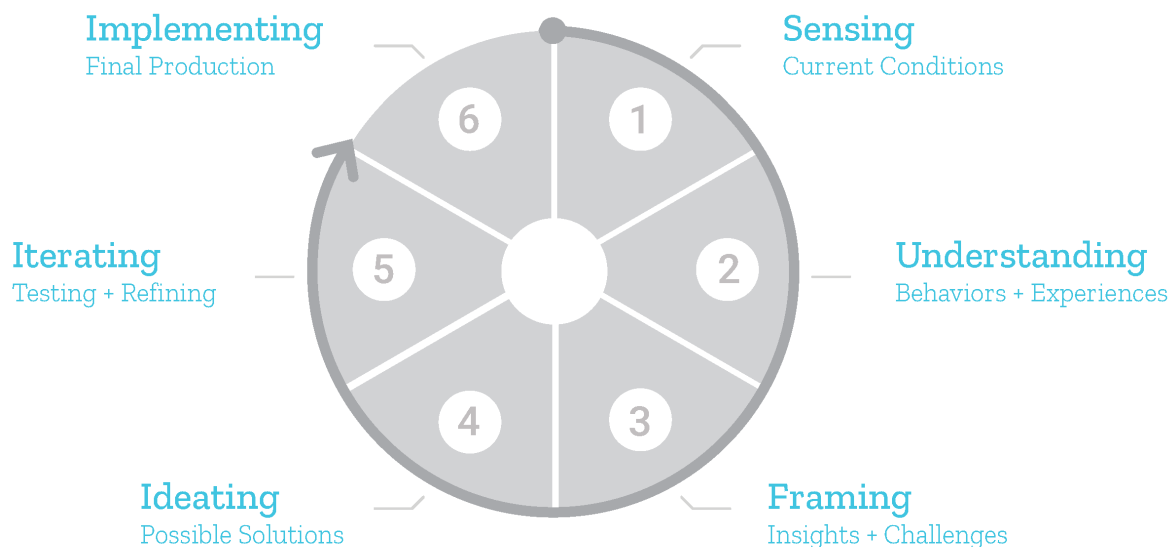


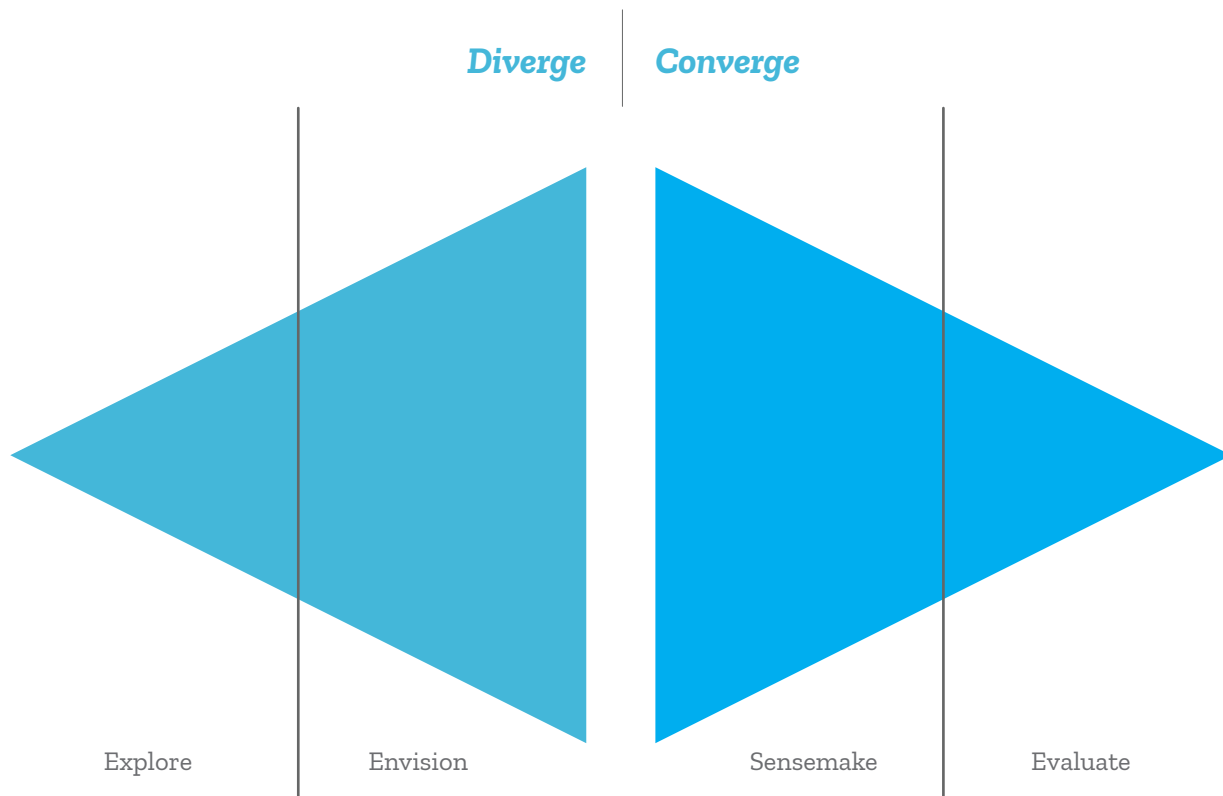
Figure 8: Design Process © 2015 Collabo Creative, LLC. All rights reserved

The design process is cyclical and iterative, in that designers can go through each step of the process several times before creating and implementing a solution. This research focused on design process steps one through five. Due to constraints of time and available resources, step six was outside the scope of the thesis.

Within each step, a process of diverging and converging also occurs. Divergent thinking is a mindset for exploring multiple perspectives, opportunities, and options. This is to defer judgement, so as not to decide which ideas to proceed with prematurely. When multiple ideas are explored quickly, it allows for more creativity at the outset. Converging begins after diverging. Convergent thinking analyzes, synthesizes, and organizes the ideas generated from diverging. Converging is used for evaluating insights that emerge from the data, in order to narrow one's focus more appropriately. Depending upon how

large and complex the data, several rounds of diverging and converging might occur within a process step before proceeding to the next step (Basadur, 2008). See Figure 9 below.

For the participatory research component of this thesis, a series of interviews were conducted with Urban Planners, a Participatory Design Session was facilitated, and a survey of existing literature was conducted. Following each of these methods, the data was analyzed to gain further insights and to move to solution development. Following is the research schedule, as well as a more in depth description of each of the methods that were used, and the methods and results of data analysis.

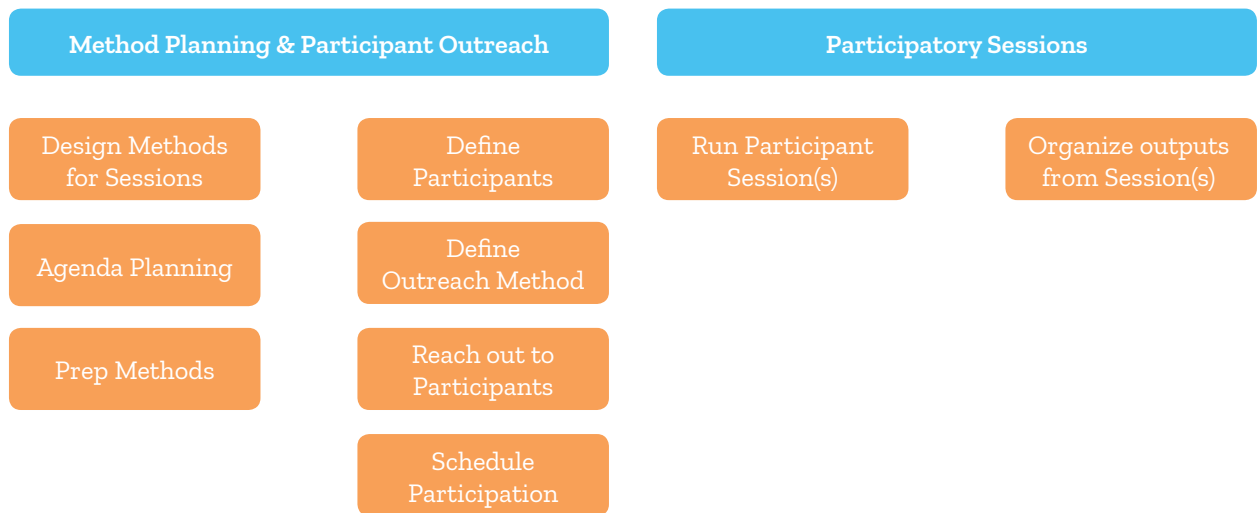


Research Plan Schedule

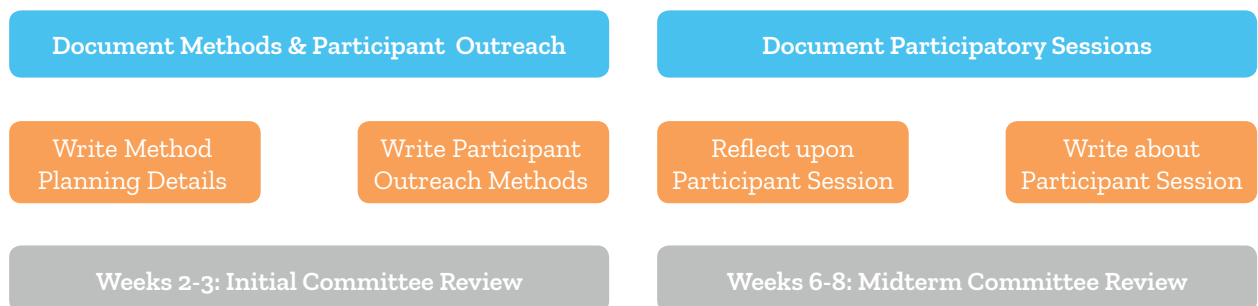
December / January

February

Participatory Research



Thesis Writing



March

April / May

Data Synthesis + Analysis

Solution Development

Data Synthesis + Analysis

Conduct data
synthesis methods

Analyze
synthesized data

Frame
Conclusions

Final Thesis Submission

Prototype
Possible Solutions

Refine
Solution

Plan + Design
Presentataion

Plan + Design
Exhibition

Document Data Synthesis + Analysis

Justify
Synthesis + Analysis

Write about
Synthesis + Analysis

Final Thesis Document

Make final
revisions

Prepare
final document

Week 10: Optional Interim Committee Feedback

Week 12: Oral Defense to Committee



3.2 Sensing // Interviews

Interviews were conducted in person with five urban planners, with the objective of sensing and understanding how they currently determine their approach for engaging the public, as well as how they evaluate whether their approach is appropriate. The objective was to obtain information about current planning and public engagement practices. The rationale for using an interview method was that they are an efficient way to get information from subject matter experts who have specific experience related to the research question. Interviews are often conducted in the beginning, exploratory phase of design research, so researchers can elicit facts from their participants that can be used to guide the research moving forward (IDEO, 2015).

The criteria for selecting Urban Planner participants was:

1. Currently employed in an Urban Planning capacity, so that they have experiential knowledge of current planning theory, methodologies, and practices
2. Has active certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), which is the professional institute of the American Planning Association (APA) that provides independent verification of planners' qualifications in the United States
3. In lieu of AICP certification, a planning work history that spans at least 10 years or a completed Master's degree is also acceptable,

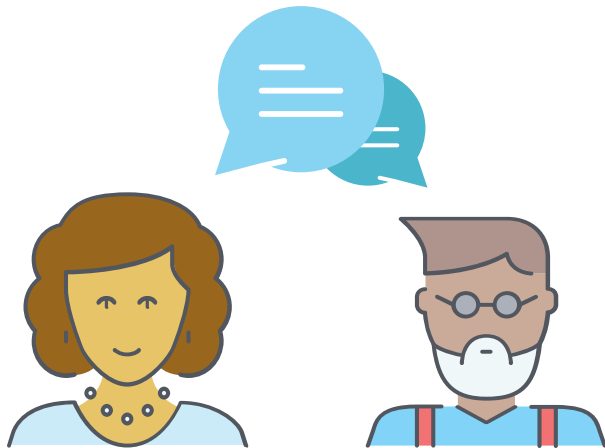
as these qualifications generally denote an advanced level of practice and expertise

4. Designs and conducts public engagement processes and methods, so they have experiential knowledge of the public engagement process and in working directly with Community Members

Each participant was asked the same questions to ensure consistency and interviews lasted approximately one hour each. With the permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded using the Apple voice recording application on an iPhone 8. To protect participant confidentiality, audio recordings were stored on a secure IUPUI Box server that requires duo-authentication login credentials.

The interview questions were:

1. What is your role throughout a public engagement process?
2. What approaches do you currently use for public engagement?
3. How do you determine and select which approach will be appropriate for engaging Community Members? Why do you do it this way?
4. How do you evaluate and test whether your approach is effective for engaging the public? Why do you do it this way?
5. Is there anything else you would like to add that has not been discussed yet?



3.3 Data Analysis of Interviews

To start framing insights from the interviews, the recordings were coded for key facts and transcribed on post it notes. A different colored post it note was used for each of the different interviews. This was in order to keep clear which interview source any single post it note came from. Once the key facts from one interview were all transcribed onto post its, the post its were then stuck onto a piece of roll paper labeled with the interview number. This was repeated for each interview. For each interview, the post its on that roll paper were moved around to affinity diagram them into categories of alike information. Affinity diagramming is a method of sense making that helps people begin to evaluate information to discover which common themes and patterns emerge from the data (Martin, Hanington, 2012). This method was used because it is effective for synthesizing large amounts of data so that it can be examined further and insights can be developed. It can take several iterations to arrive at the most appropriate categorized themes. Once the data was affinity diagrammed separately for each interview, the data was then affinity diagrammed for all interviews combined, in effect synthesizing the categories across the groups. This allowed for themes to emerge that were common across all interviewees, as well as categories for where their views and experiences differed. The categories that emerged from this diagramming were: exclusion due to lack of access; public mistrust; lack of public

knowledge; lack of transparency about the process; groups who have access to the process; methods of engagement; and approaches to engagement.

During the interviews, the Urban Planners brought up many of the same issues that were presented in the literature review. They stated that they feel the public has strong mistrust towards them, while acknowledging that Planners have not always done a sufficient job of ensuring the public has equitable access to the process. One Planner stated that the field has a very shameful history of racial discrimination that they are only recently starting to openly acknowledge. They also acknowledged there is too much of a focus for many Planners on the prescriptive approach, in lieu of more innovative and engaging forms of public engagement. This is partially because people are used to that way of doing things and do not know how to move forward. There was emphasis on the fact that Planners are not necessarily out to overpower the public, and many simply have trouble finding a balance between their prescribed agendas and that of the public. Another Planner noted that the field seems to be in a state of limbo, where the citizen's activist approach of the 1960's and the domination of the Planner as the main expert have not quite reconciled yet. This Planner felt the way forward could look more like a balance between the activist spirit and the theoretical focus.

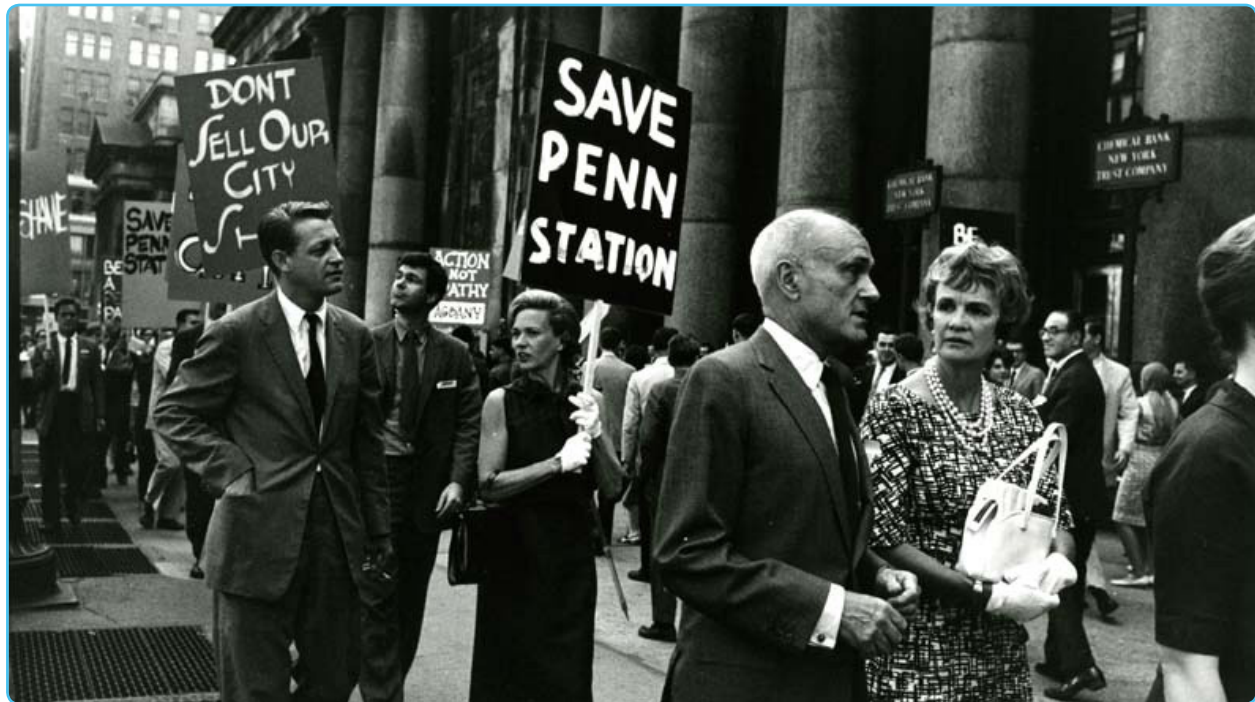
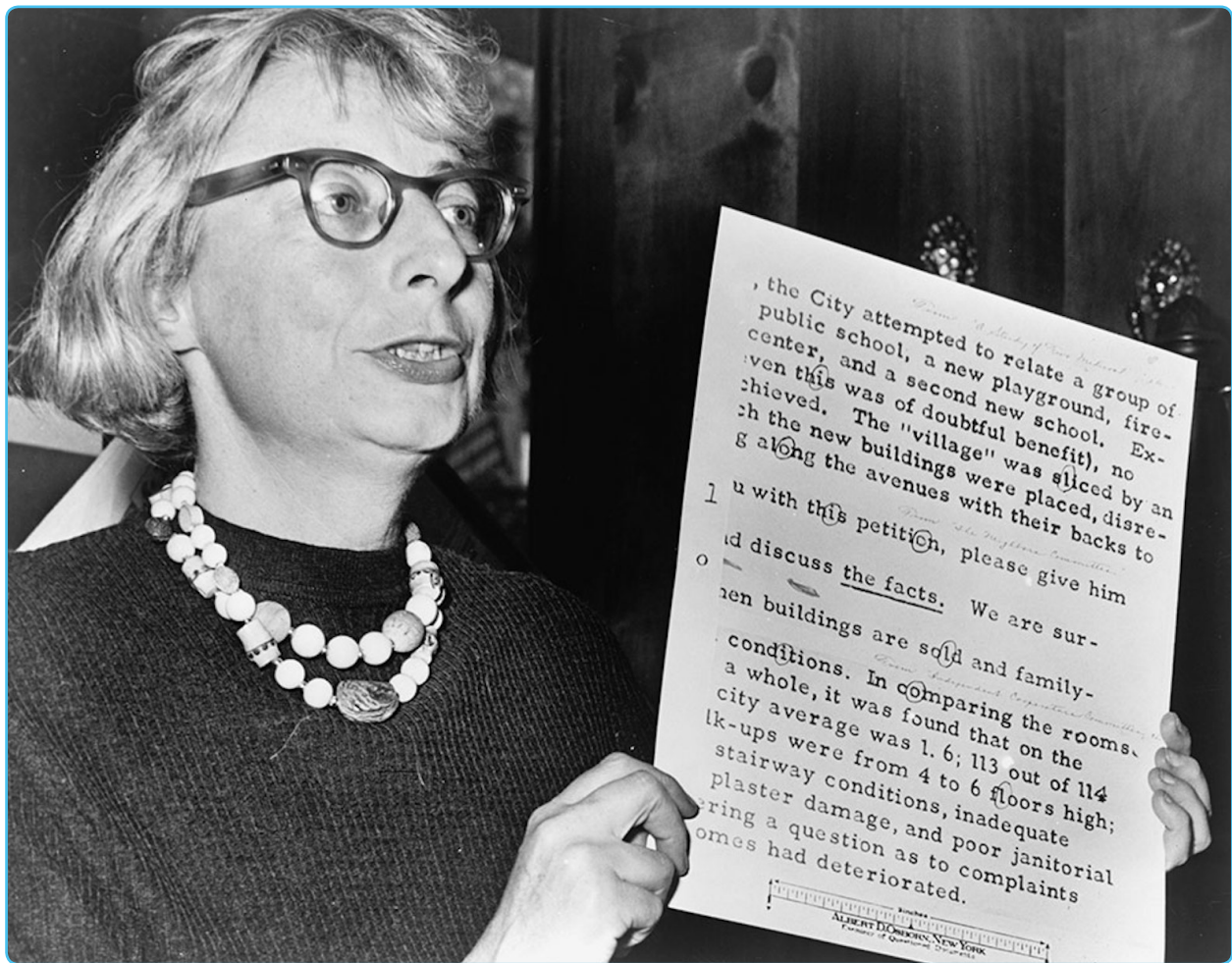


Figure 11 (top): Citizen activist Jane Jacobs opposing Bob Moses' proposal for a roadway through Greenwich Village in Manhattan.
Photo credit: The Jane Jacobs Documentary.

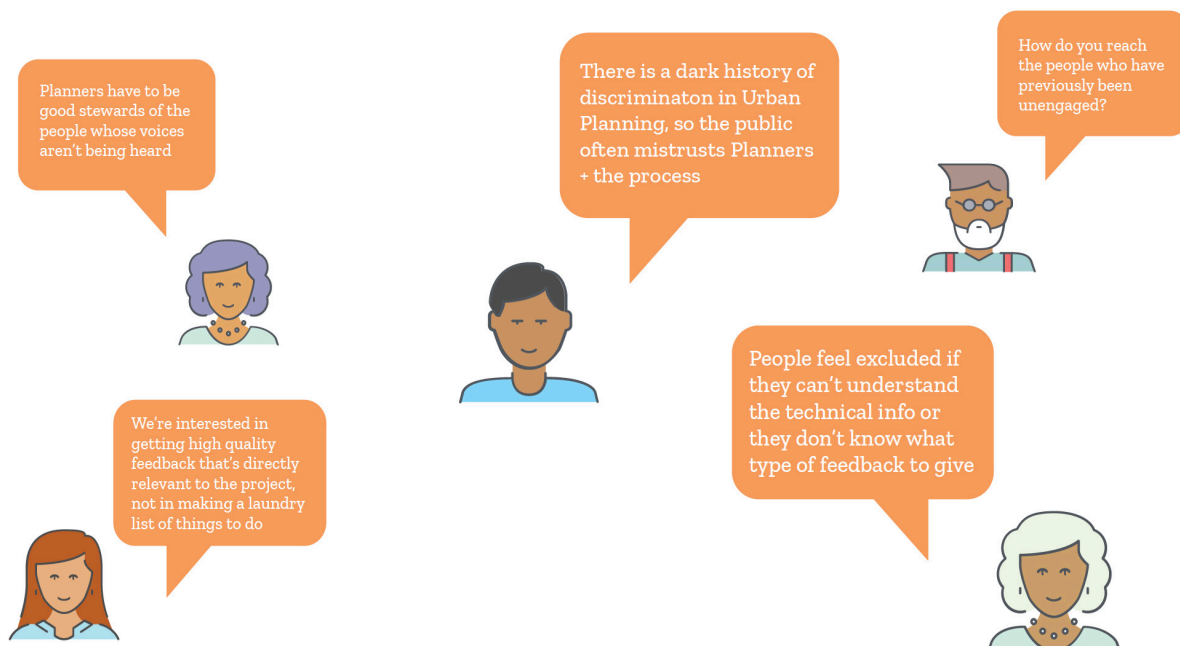
Figure 12 (bottom): Architect Philip Johnson + Aline Saarinen march in protest of the demolition of Penn Station.
Photo credit: Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation.

One way in which the city agency they work with is trying to accomplish this is by facilitating a workshop series called The Peoples' Planning Academy. This workshop series educates the public on basic knowledge about urban planning. More specifically, it also educates them about land use planning, by outlining different land use types and the conditions used to determine where different land uses are appropriate. People who complete the People's Planning Academy series are then invited to join the Land Use Plan Stakeholder Committee during the mapping phase of the City's land use plan development process (Plan 2020, 2018).

Another Planner talked about how they are helping residents pilot their own neighborhood associations to become more actively engaged in Urban Planning and other relevant city processes. The goal of the program is to reach communities that have typically been underserved, such as areas that are economically disadvantaged or whose residents are predominantly people of color. Through this piloting program, the neighborhood advocate canvassed various neighborhoods that were not registered with the city. They held a community gathering in these neighborhoods to inform residents about different ways they could start to organize. Once public interest was gained, the advocates then held several meetings with the interested neighborhoods over the course of 8-10 months. During these

meetings, the residents were given various tools and resources to help establish a neighborhood association. Following its establishment, they were officially registered with the City. As a result, Planners and other City Officials were required by the City to meet with a Neighborhood Association any time a project was being planned that would impact them.

Something that also came to light going back through the interviews is that the planners seemed to predominantly focus on the challenges, and how they are trying to fix them, that they have in engaging the public, and less upon the actual approaches to engagement they are using. While some methodology and approach was discussed, it was primarily to discuss how the public engaged or did not when those approaches were used. A point of reflection is that the interviews strayed from the designed interview questions, since other themes that were not necessarily anticipated came up in the discussions. These diversions of topic seemed significant and strongly relevant to the power dynamics that were examined in the literature review, so they were explored further in the interviews. The information from the interviews and the analyzed data helped inform the method design for the participatory design session, which is the next participatory method used in the process.

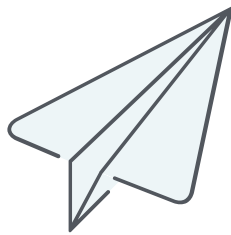


How do you reach people who have been previously unengaged?

Starting the Conversation



Door to Door
Canvassing



Flyers



Word of Mouth
in Community

Building + Sustaining Relationships



Community
Conversation Meeting



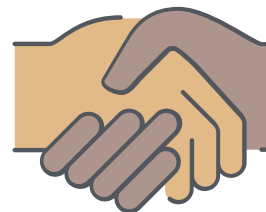
Held for previously unengaged people, in order to understand their needs and priorities.



Grassroots
Development



Help people pilot their own neighborhood association using asset-based community development.

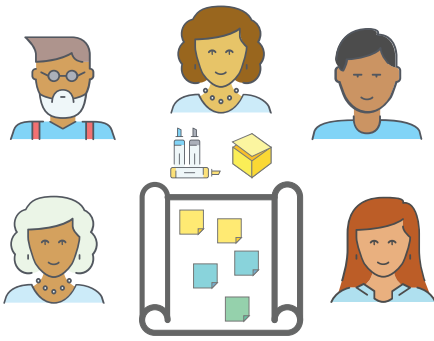


Community
Partnerships



Enlist the help of community partners who are established in the community.





3.4 Understanding // Participatory Design Session

A participatory design session was designed and facilitated for a group of Urban Planners, Community Advocates, and Community Members. Participatory design sessions allow multiple groups to come together in one collaborative space, using their diverse ideas and perspectives, in order to come up with solutions that benefit each group (Martin, Hanington, 2012). The objective of the session was to gain a deeper understanding of how each of the community groups could collaborate throughout a public engagement process. Collaboration could help the groups build trust based on the values that each group has. The data from the session would then be analyzed and used to develop a conceptual framework for

public engagement. Methods and objectives for the session were designed based on the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology, which was pioneered by John Kretzmann and John L. McKnight at Northwestern University. ABCD is based on the values, potentials, and strengths that a community has, in order to leverage their existing positive assets for community development, rather than focus on the negativity of challenges or deficits. Each person is viewed as having gifts that will add to the value and future growth of the community. This methodology can be especially helpful for empowering marginalized populations who often get excluded and treated like they do not have much to contribute (Kretzmann, McKnight, 1996). See Figure 13 below for an example of an asset map that was developed by the ABCD Institute.

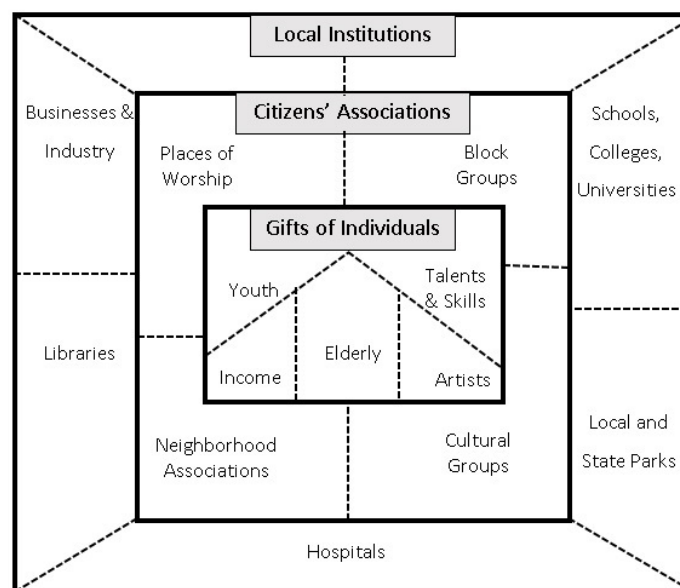


Figure 13: Asset Map (Kretzman, McKnight, 1996)

The methods designed and used for the session were:

1. The first method in the session was roundtable discussion of community values. The six participants were grouped according to three community groups: Urban Planners, Community Advocates, and Community Members. From there they were split into two groups with one participant from each community group. In the split groups, participants had a roundtable discussion about the value that each of the community groups has to offer in the public engagement process. For example, the group took turns talking about which values they felt Community Members could offer, and once they each had a turn to talking, they moved onto discussing which values Urban Planners could offer. Every participant was given three blank worksheets that were each labeled with one of the community groups. While one participant was talking about the value of a community group, the other participants wrote key phrases

onto post it notes. The key phrases were brief representations of what the person was saying. Post its were stuck to the worksheet that corresponded with the community group they were discussing. See Appendix pages 92-93 for the community asset roundtable worksheet templates.

2. Next the participants broke from their groups to move about the room and collaborate freely with each other in an affinity diagramming activity. After diverging on the values of each community group, participants stuck the post it notes from their worksheets onto sheets of roll paper that were hanging on the walls. There were three sheets of roll paper, each labeled with one of the community groups. From there, they looked at the phrases on the post its for each roll paper and grouped them into thematic categories of information. This took a few rounds of combing through the phrases and rearranging them. Once they were happy with each thematic category they labeled them with a name that briefly described the relationships



Figure 14: Participants collaborating during affinity diagramming



Figure 15: Participants affinity diagramming assets that Community Members offer

between the data in the category.

3. After affinity diagramming, everybody gathered back at the center table and discussed the categories they came up with for each community group, including their rationale for each of the categories. Next, they were asked to look more closely at each of the categories to see how the data within those categories influenced each other across the three community groups. From there, they began to determine how one community group could have a positive impact in conjunction with one or both of the other community groups—or how each of the groups could collaborate to help each other, especially to help balance the challenges that any one group experiences. The objective of this method was to gain insight into the cause and effect relationships across the data and to see what impacts those relationships have (IDEO, 2015). Participants wrote their preliminary insights about the relationships in Sharpie marker on the roll

paper next to the categories they related with.

4. Taking their insights further, the participants developed “How might we...” (HMW) opportunity statements. A HMW statement takes a deep insight that was gained from data analysis and frames it into a question for prompting action. These statements can be used as springboards for ideating on possible solutions (Basadur, 1998). In this case, the HMW statements, used in conjunction with the rest of the data generated in the participatory design session, were intended to contribute to development of the conceptual framework for the thesis. See Appendix pages 94-97 for the worksheets with the HMW statements that the participants developed.

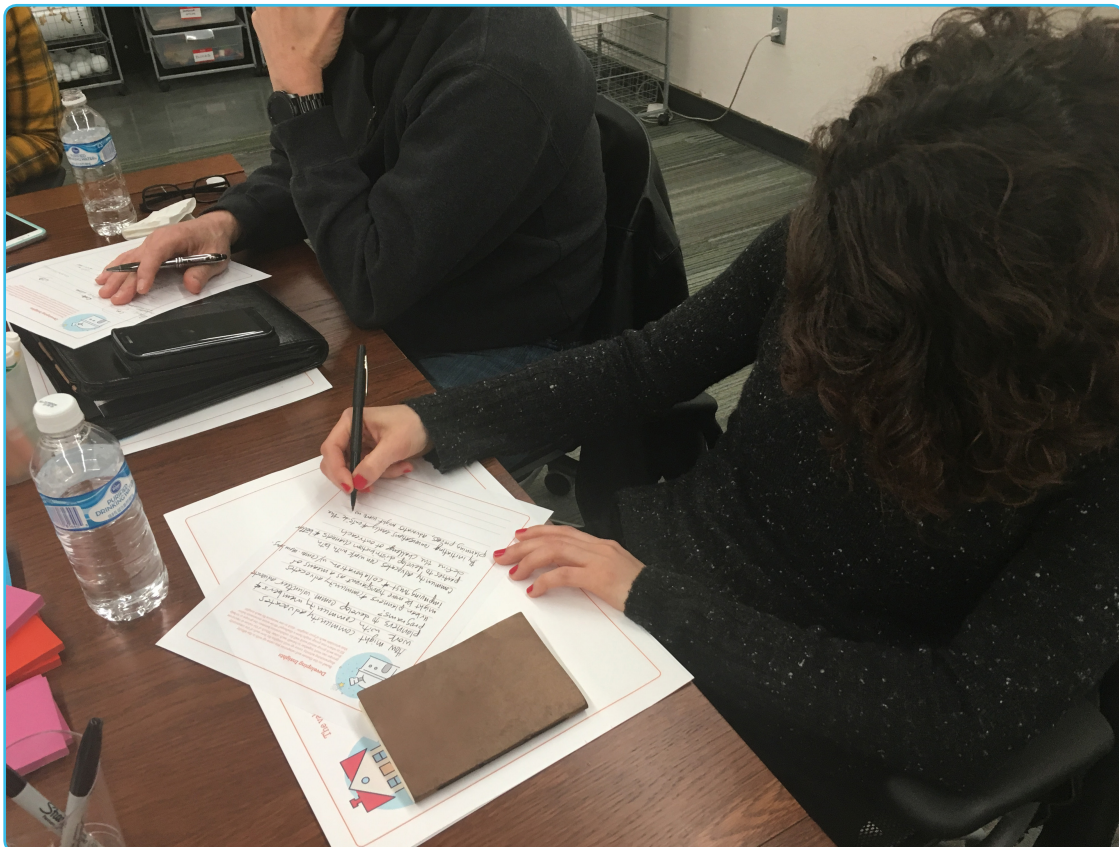


Figure 16 (top): Participants discussing insights they developed based on the grouped assets

Figure 17 (bottom): Participants writing How Might We statements from their insights



3.5 Data Analysis of Participatory Design Session

Participants came up with several values that they feel each of the community groups has to offer in the public engagement process.

The main assets of Community Advocates were:

- Understanding connections in the community
- Objectivity
- High level of understanding of community issues
- Being able to bridge the gap between Urban Planners and Community
- Being able to engender trust within the community
- Facilitating trust building between groups
- Organizing peers and outreach

The main assets of Community Members were:

- First hand experience of the community + understanding daily life there
- Personal investment in what happens in the community
- Able to challenge and test the ideas of Urban Planners
- Layman's attitude and boots on the ground approach
- Diversity of ideas and perspectives
- Able to reach out to younger neighbors

The main assets of Urban Planners were:

- Able to see the bigger and longer term picture
- Understanding of design history and trends
- Future and goal oriented
- Technical and theoretical expertise
- First hand perspective of the current political + government system
- Understanding of what is feasible and can be accomplished

Following the participatory design session, the data and outputs from the session were synthesized together. The diagrammed categories for Urban Planners were: Vision, Process, Knowledge of Political Landscape, Feasibility, Communications, and Technical Skills. For Community Members the categories were: Improving the Process, Community Knowledge, and Collaboration and Representation. For Community Advocates the categories were: Connectivity, Process Advocate, Messaging, Trust, Community Organization, and Collection.



3.6 Framing // Survey of Existing Literature

Following the synthesis of the data from the interviews and participatory design session, more data was needed to supplement arguments regarding the complexity of the relationship between Community Members and Urban Planners. More information was needed about the various sources of community members' mistrust towards planners', and how that intersects with the power dynamics between the two groups. Additional information was also needed about planners' reasons for mistrusting the public. The survey of literature included scholarly peer reviewed articles from journals with a focus on Urban Planning and related disciplines, such as architecture, community development, and planning and environmental law. Primary sources of research were consulted for planners' perspectives that were not found in the literature, including blogs, websites, and digital editorials that are considered reputable within the Urban Planning profession. The survey of literature also included scholarly peer reviewed articles and books on topics of critical race theory, African American history, intersectional feminist theory, gender theory, and queer theory. These topics were reviewed for more in depth examination of the history of institutional racism and gender-based discrimination in Planning, as well as to provide justification for how these issues continue to impact the field today.

The information collected was incorporated into the Literature Review and Justification sections of this thesis. Then the additional information was charted on a grid that included columns for public engagement practices, approaches, opportunities,

and challenges. Rows on the grid were created to document the concepts, variables, and factors that related to each of those categories. The purpose of creating a grid of data is to begin charting out and creating a repository of the relevant information for more efficient categorization and analysis. Seeing all of the data on one grid is helpful for further synthesis. Rigorous data synthesis allows researchers to arrive at a far more profound level of insight into the true nature of highly complex problems. It is necessary to arrive at this level to move onto development of possible solutions.

Using this grid, four key concepts were identified that correlate with one another to impact the quality of engagement between Urban Planners and Community Members: Level of Trust, Level of Power, Level of Knowledge, and Project Scope and Impact. Trust and Power were initially identified as being related to either group's perception of the other—that is, Community Members' level of trust towards Planners, and vice versa; and the level of power that either group has to influence the process of engagement. Knowledge was initially identified as being the level of knowledge that Community Members have of Urban Planning process and theory. These three concepts were thought to be variable dependent on their relationships to one another. Project Scope and Impact was identified as fixed, yet still having an impact on the quality of engagement. Project Scope is the scale of how large the project is, while Project Impact is the severity of the impacts the project would have upon the Community Members, project area, and physical environment.

CONCEPTS	CHALLENGES (OF INVOLVING CM)	PRACTICES (INVOLVING CM)	OPPORTUNITIES? VALUES?	PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH TO PE
FACTORS	MORE MONEY TIME STAFF PLANNERS AGENCIES THEY WORK FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROJECT SCOPE PLAN INFO	EDUCATIONAL TOOLS PLANNERS KNOWLEDGE OF THEORY TECH. KNOWLEDGE COMMUNICATION TOOLS	MINDSET BELIEFS COMMUNITY NEEDS COMMUNITY DESIRES TRUST HUMAN FACTORS	PRESENTATION WITH PROJECT INFO FEEDBACK FORMS DOCUMENTS WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS TOWN HALL LOCATION COMMUNICATION TOOLS INCONVENIENT HOURS
	VARIABLES CAN BE PERCEPTIONS (I.E. ASKING IT WILL COST MORE) AMOUNT OF INFO GIVEN LEVEL OF TRUST - PLANNER SIDE - COMMUNITY SIDE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT: MONEY AMOUNT OF EFFORT LENGTH OF TIME DESIGN PHASE LEVEL OF INTEREST POWER DIFFERENTIAL AMOUNT OF VALUE PLACED ON PROCESS LEVEL OF TRANSPARENCY			POWER DIF. - STRONG ROLE HIERARCHY - LOW TRUST - LOW VALUE PLACED ON PUBLIC OPINION - DESIGNER IS EXPERT - LIMITED TIME - TO IMPLEMENT - LIMITED TIME THAT PUBLIC IS INVOLVED

CONCEPTS	CHALLENGES (OF INVOLVING CM)	PRACTICES (INVOLVING CM)	OPPORTUNITIES? VALUES?	PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH TO PE
FACTORS	MORE MONEY TIME STAFF PLANNERS AGENCIES THEY WORK FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROJECT SCOPE PLAN INFO	EDUCATIONAL TOOLS PLANNERS KNOWLEDGE OF THEORY TECH. KNOWLEDGE COMMUNICATION TOOLS	MINDSET BELIEFS COMMUNITY NEEDS COMMUNITY DESIRES TRUST HUMAN FACTORS	PRESENTATION WITH PROJECT INFO FEEDBACK FORMS DOCUMENTS WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS TOWN HALL LOCATION COMMUNICATION TOOLS INCONVENIENT HOURS
	VARIABLES CAN BE PERCEPTIONS (I.E. ASKING IT WILL COST MORE) AMOUNT OF INFO GIVEN LEVEL OF TRUST - PLANNER SIDE - COMMUNITY SIDE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT: MONEY AMOUNT OF EFFORT LENGTH OF TIME DESIGN PHASE LEVEL OF INTEREST POWER DIFFERENTIAL AMOUNT OF VALUE PLACED ON PROCESS LEVEL OF TRANSPARENCY			POWER DIF. - STRONG ROLE HIERARCHY - LOW TRUST - LOW VALUE PLACED ON PUBLIC OPINION - DESIGNER IS EXPERT - LIMITED TIME - TO IMPLEMENT - LIMITED TIME THAT PUBLIC IS INVOLVED

Figures 18 + 19: These are each shots of the grid that was created as part of the data synthesis for the literature survey.



3.7 Ideating // Possible Solutions

The grid was primarily used as a beginning step towards developing possible solutions that would answer the research question. Instead of organizing descriptions of the data on a grid, it was determined that a visual representation of the data would be more effective. On this grid, the deeper correlations between the data was not easily understood and the richness of the data was not coming across. However, visual diagrams can often help people understand complex relationships across qualitative data more clearly and immediately than written narratives of that same data (Kumar, 2012).

After some further research about different ways of visualizing data, the chosen solution to move forward with prototyping and testing was a conceptual framework. A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships amongst them (Miles, Huberman, 1994). It synthesizes the concepts of a more general theoretical perspective, related to a specific research context, in order to guide people

in their approach to further research or practice (Imenda, 2014). The rationale for moving forward with a conceptual framework is that it is an efficient and clear way for Urban Planners to more deeply understand the complex nature of their relationship with Community Members. Primarily, it can be used to gain a new level of understanding of the underlying causes, conditions, and factors of a problem or opportunity space. It can then be used to influence how they approach that problem or opportunity (Imenda, 2014). A framework would visually communicate the different key factors, concepts, and variables of a public engagement process. Urban Planners can use the framework to gain insight into the key differences between a prescriptive approach and a collaborative approach to public engagement. Through this they can learn what factors they might need to focus their attention and efforts on, in order to help them make a shift to a collaborative approach to public engagement.

A conceptual framework...

explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the **key factors**, **concepts**, or **variables**—and the presumed **relationships**.

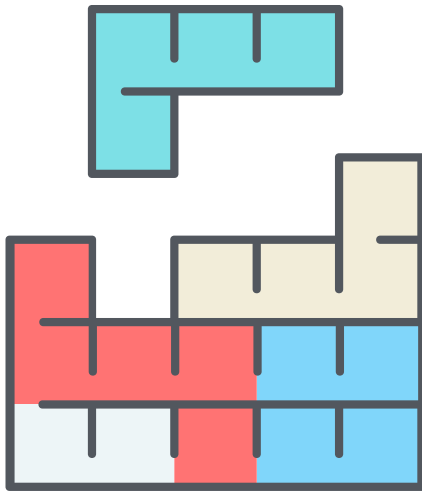
Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994)

incorporates pieces that are borrowed from elsewhere, but the **structure**, the overall **coherence**, is something that **you build**, not something that exists ready-made.

Maxwell, J. A. (2008)

synthesizes concepts of a more general **theoretical perspective**, related to a specific **research context**, in order to **guide** people in their approach to further **research** or **practice**.

Imenda, S. (2014)



3.8 Iterating // Testing + Refining

To start off the iterating phase, a series of rapid prototypes were drawn to represent various possible ways of visualizing the conceptual framework. Rapid prototyping is a quick way to iterate on a variety of ideas, by making those ideas into a more tangible form. Ideas can be quickly sketched or built in a low fidelity form, without all of the details fully fleshed out, to get a general sense of what is working and not working (IDEO, 2015). This method was used because it was a fast and effective way to test multiple possible versions of a conceptual framework before developing a high fidelity prototype.

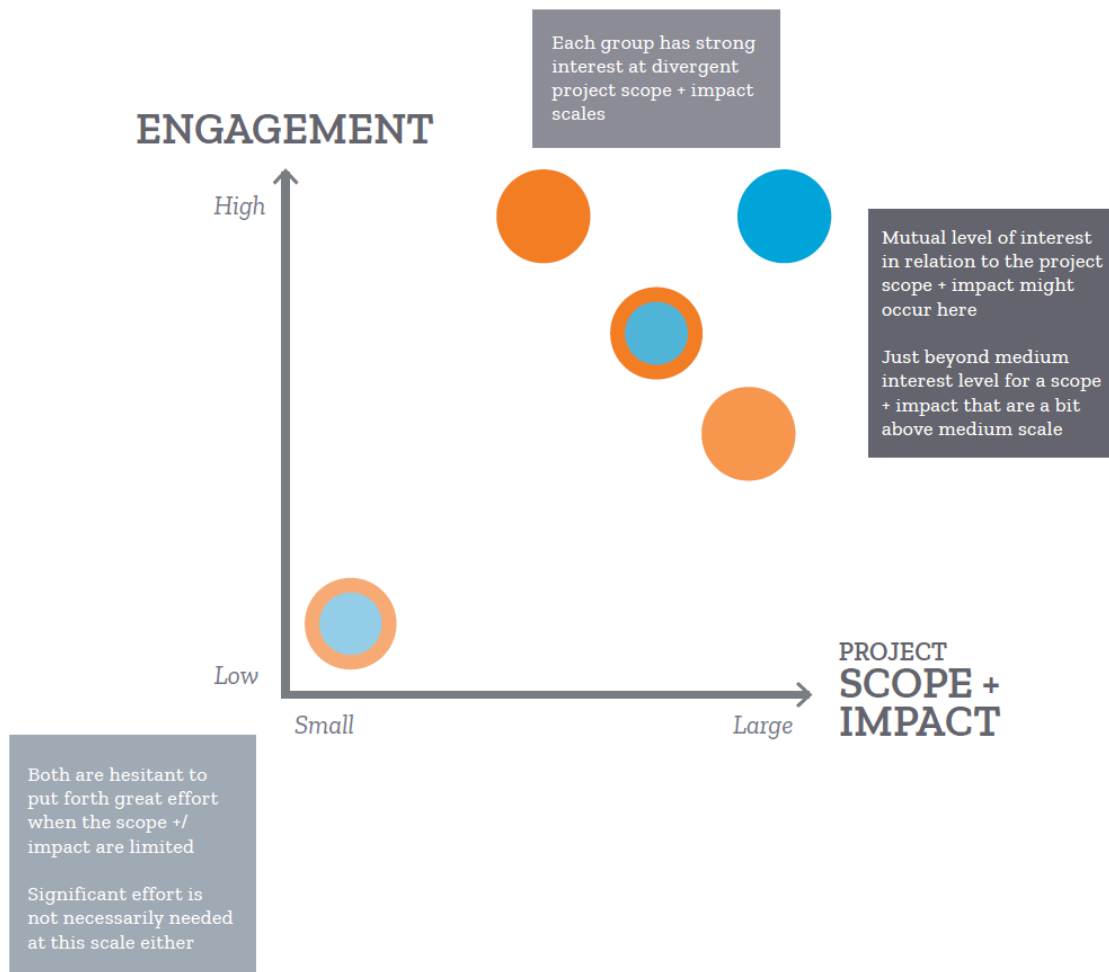
The first rapid prototypes were sketches illustrating a comparison of public engagement approaches—a prescriptive approach and a collaborative approach. The left side of the sketch was labeled Prescriptive Approach and right side was labeled Collaborative Approach. Underneath the labels was a list of the concepts of Trust, Power, Public Knowledge, and Project Scope and Impact. The Prescriptive Approach and Collaborative Approach were each

quickly labeled with some factors that relate to each of those concepts and an arrow connecting the concepts and factors on either side. It was essentially a side by side comparison of the approaches and which concepts and factors relate to each approach. What was not working, though, was it appeared as though the two approaches were on two poles, when there is actually more nuance in the differences between them than being strictly opposite.

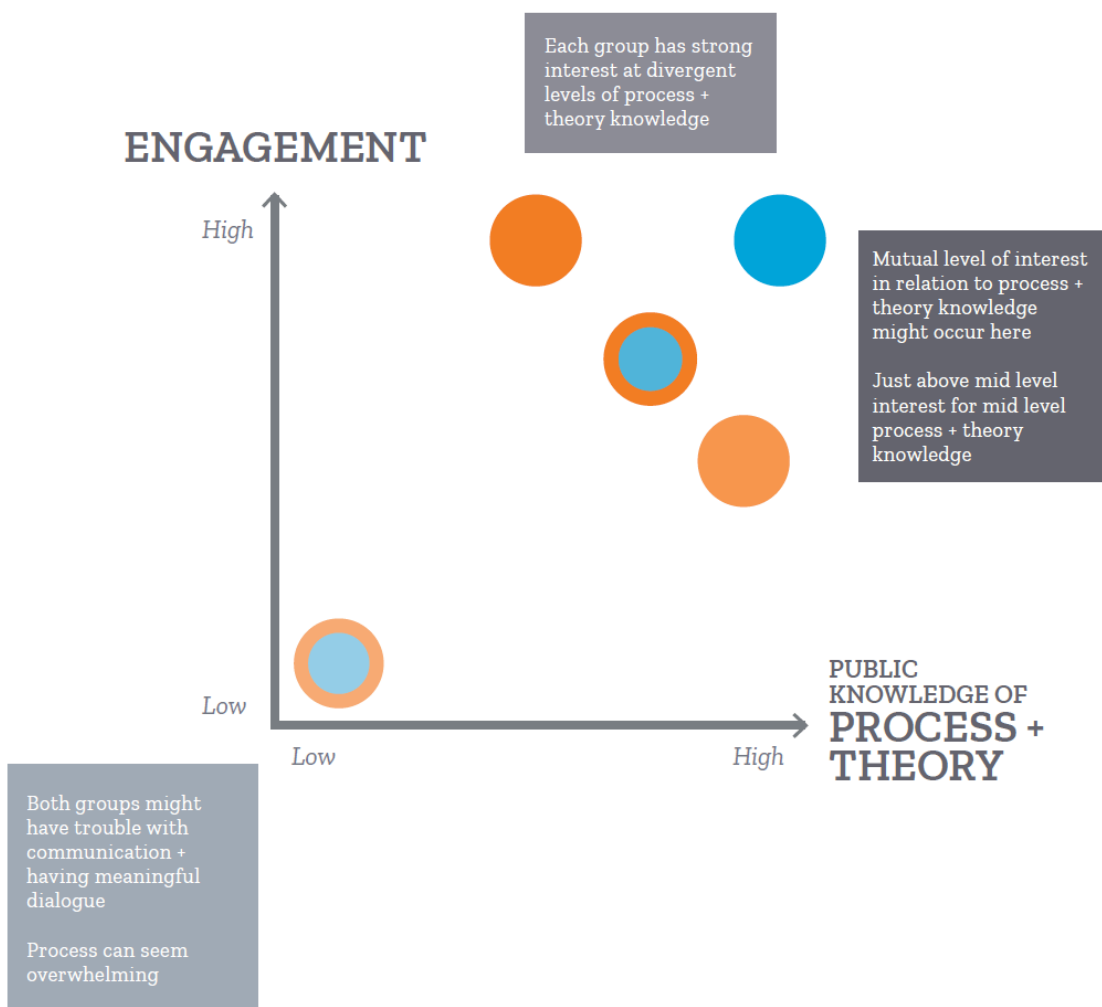
Another diagram sketch was then drawn to show the differences and where they overlap to try to resolve the approaches appearing like opposites. This also did not work, since it did not capture intersecting variable relationships across the data well enough. Next was a few simple sketches of an XY axis line chart showing the direction each variable was going, with each axis being labeled with one of the concepts. Since it showed correlation more effectively, it was chosen for further development.

Higher fidelity prototypes were created of the charts, using Adobe Illustrator, to see how they might work with more detail and refinement. The charts showed showed the direct, positive, and negative correlations of how both Urban Planners and Community Members are impacted by varying levels of power, trust, knowledge, project scope, engagement. The purpose for creating these charts was to create a visualized diagram that would help to further evaluate the correlations between the data.

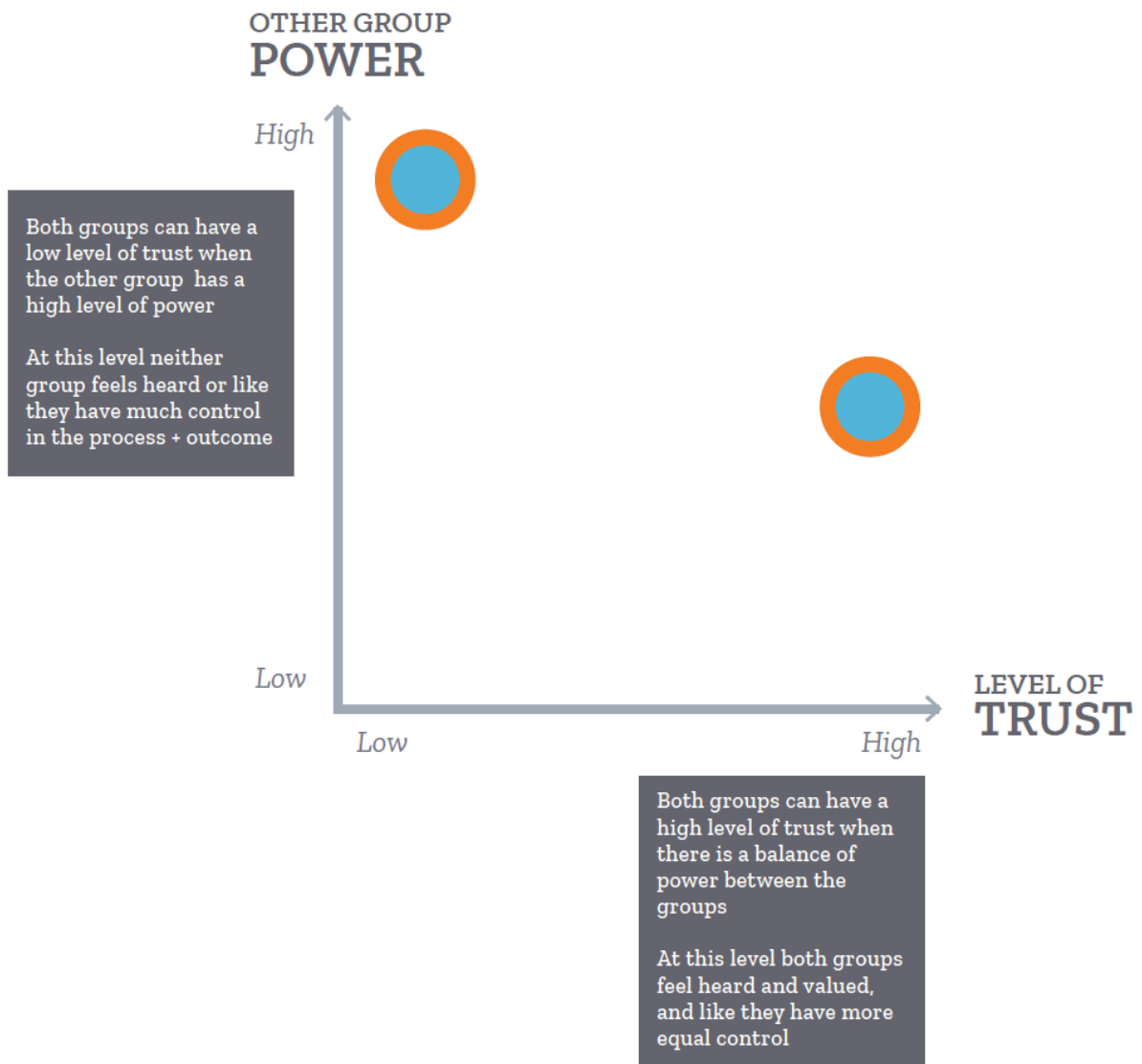
PUBLIC + PLANNER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT PER PROJECT SCOPE



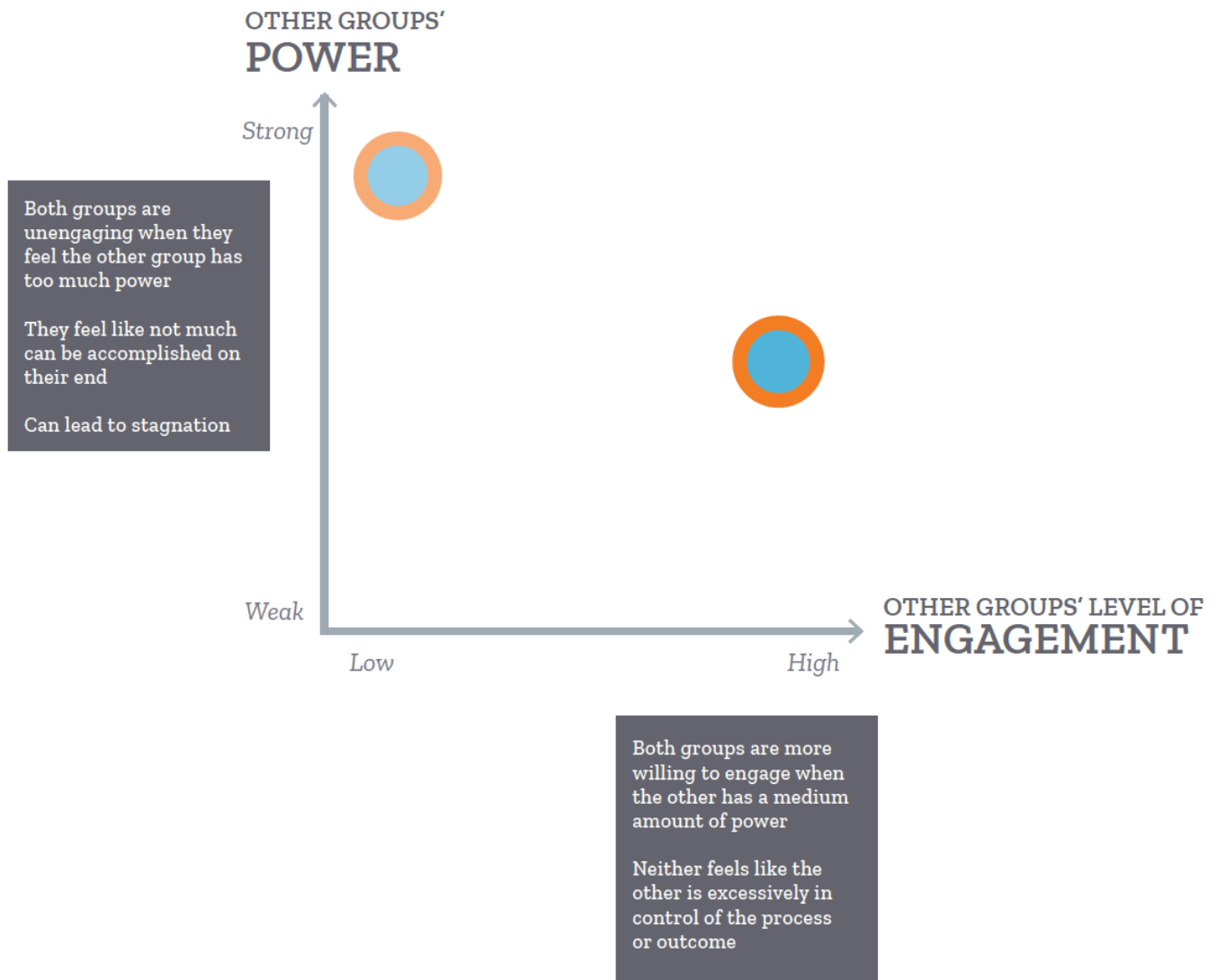
PUBLIC + PLANNER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT PER PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE



INTERSECTION OF POWER + TRUST



INTERSECTION OF POWER + LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT



INTERSECTION OF PROJECT SCOPE + IMPACT + LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Level of
Engagement



High

Medium

Low

<p>At large scopes Public will engage more fully or for an ongoing period</p> <p>Extensive community impacts anticipated</p> <p>High controversy +/- high budget</p>	<p>At large scopes, engaging Public seems messy + complex, yet Planners don't want to/can't avoid it</p> <p>Extensive community impacts assessed</p> <p>High controversy +/- high budget</p>	<p>Each group has strong interest at divergent project scope + impact scales</p>
	<p>Engaging Public seems standard + familiar for projects with mid size scope</p> <p>Mid level community impacts assessed</p> <p>Unlikely to have much controversy +/- midrange budget</p>	<p>Mutual level of interest in relation to the project scope + impact might occur for projects with a mid size scope + impact</p>
<p>At small scopes Public will sporadically engage or not engage</p> <p>Minimal community impacts anticipated</p> <p>Low controversy +/- low budget</p>	<p>Engaging Public seems like too much effort relative to small project scope</p> <p>Minimal community impacts assessed</p> <p>Low controversy +/- low budget</p>	<p>Both groups are hesitant to put forth great effort when the scope +/- impact are limited</p> <p>Significant effort or engagement is not necessarily needed at this scale either</p>

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

<p>Strong or frequent prior participation</p> <p>Information is digestible and easily accessed</p> <p>Openness about process + how to participate</p>	<p>Two-way discussion is easier to facilitate when Public has a mid level knowledge of process + theory</p> <p>Perception that Public knows how to engage meaningfully</p> <p>Perception that Planners still have expertise over Public + can guide them</p>	<p>An intersecting level of engagement might occur for both groups when Public has a mid level knowledge of process + theory</p>
	<p>Perception that Public knows too much + might take over process +/- try to steer project</p> <p>More common in areas where Public has high educational attainment +/- is affluent</p> <p>Perception that Planner role/profession will lose value or relevancy</p>	<p>Planners have a different level of engagement than Public when there is high level of public knowledge</p>
<p>Public has no or sporadic prior engagement</p> <p>Information is too technical +/- inaccessible, so Public doesn't know how to meaningfully engage</p> <p>Little transparency about process + how to participate</p>	<p>Perception that Public knows too little + won't understand process + theory</p> <p>Difficulty bridging the gap in knowledge to get more meaningful participation + feedback</p>	<p>Both groups might have trouble with communication + having meaningful dialogue</p> <p>Process can seem overwhelming</p>

INTERSECTION OF POWER + TRUST

Level
of Trust

↑
High

Feel valued, heard, and included through the process

Diverse representation and inclusion of the Public

Able to be engaged in more innovative + collaborative ways

Will often give a level of decision making power to the Public

Planners themselves more likely to reflect the diversity of the Public

Both groups can have a high level of trust when there is a balance of power between the groups

At this level both groups feel heard and valued, and like they have more equal control

Low

Public often gets excluded or involved minimally in process

Institutional racism + gender discrimination

Planners don't reflect the diversity of the Public

Planners might hold the view of the "designer as expert" who knows what is best for the public

Likely want to control the process to a greater degree + make decisions

Both groups can have a low level of trust when the other group has a high level of power

At this level neither group feels heard or like they have much control in the process + outcome

INTERSECTION OF POWER + ENGAGEMENT

Level of
Engagement

↑
High

When Planners have a mid level of power, Public feels they can engage + have their needs heard

They are willing to work with Planners if they feel they can participate in decision making

When Public has a mid level of power, Planners are very comfortable engaging with them

At this level, Planners want to get Public engaged + want to consider their input and needs

Both groups are more willing to engage when the other has a medium amount of power

Neither feels like the other is excessively in control of the process or outcome

↓
Low

Excess Planner power can result in a very disinterested Public

Public might feel burnt out from their lack of power in the process over time and stop engaging

When Public gains more power and becomes Organized to oppose a project, Planners become disinterested in engaging

Planners already have archetypes of Public as "angry" + "trying to stop the project" to describe this

Both groups become unengaged when they feel the other group has too much power

Can feel like not much can be accomplished on their end
























Can lead to stagnation

After reviewing the charts, the data was still not synthesized clearly enough. The charts did not sufficiently capture some of the interdependent or causal aspects of the concepts. For example, the way in which power, knowledge, and trust correlate was still shown more like each of these factors were independently influencing Urban Planners and Community Members.

As a supplement to the charts, an “if/then” matrix was designed. This matrix was intended as a recommendation for prioritizing which concepts to focus on, in order to achieve a more ideal state of public engagement. However, this matrix mostly illustrated how to maximize the concepts themselves of trust, power, knowledge, as well as managing project scope. It did not clearly articulate that the goal is to achieve a collaborative relationship between Urban Planners and Community Members, in order to arrive at a higher overall quality of engagement. From here, several more rapid prototypes were made to try to visualize the framework in a new

way. One was a three dimensional XYZ graph version of the if/then matrix, which included low to high quality of engagement as a variable on the Y axis. Another was more like a directional diagram of how knowledge, power, and trust lead into each other. However, a major missing element in these prototypes was the importance of collaboration and quality of engagement, and how to define them in relation to trust, power, and knowledge. Additionally, the people involved, Urban Planners and Community Members, were not adequately represented.

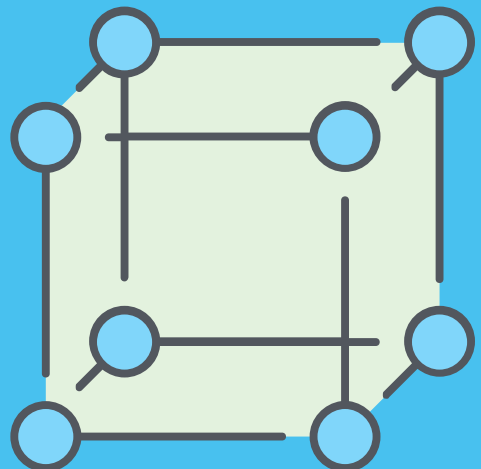
The next prototype focused on elaborating how collaboration and quality of engagement fit into the framework, as well as clearly showing Urban Planners’ and Community Members’ roles in the process. It set up a conditional relationship between one group’s knowledge, power, and trust, in that one group’s level of knowledge and power results in the other group’s level of trust. For example, the framework shows that in a prescriptive approach, Urban Planners’ high levels of knowledge plus

TRUST Public can become more engaged if they have a high level of trust towards Planners Planners can be more engaging if they have a high level of trust towards Public	If trust is high then focus on				
	If trust is low then focus on				
POWER Public is either highly engaged or unengaged when Planners have excess power Planners are unengaging when they feel the Public has excess power	If power is high then focus on				
	If power is low then focus on				
PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF PROCESS + THEORY Public can become more engaged if they have a high level of knowledge Planners become less engaging if they feel the Public has high expertise	If knowledge is high then focus on				
	If knowledge is low then focus on				
PROJECT SCOPE + IMPACT Public becomes more engaged as scope + impact gets larger, to voice their needs Planners are less engaging as scope + impact gets larger, from fear of backlash	If project is large then focus on				
	If project is small then focus on				
 Public  Planners  Public + Planners		MAXIMIZING TRUST OF BOTH PUBLIC + PLANNERS	BALANCING POWER OF BOTH PUBLIC + PLANNERS	OPTIMIZING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF PROCESS + THEORY	MANAGING ENGAGEMENT PER PROJECT SCOPE + IMPACT

power results in Community Members' low level of trust towards Urban Planners. The flip situation is also true, of Community Members' high knowledge plus power, results in Urban Planners' low trust. When either or both of these cases are present, it then leads to weak collaboration, which leads to a low quality of engagement. The prototype shows that in a collaborative approach, one groups' high levels of knowledge and power can result in high trust on the part of the other group (Farrell, 2004). The way this framework was set up seemed too close to a totally opposite situation, though. Upon further evaluation, the specific types of knowledge each group possesses and the value they place on that knowledge was found to be an important factor in relation to power. Knowledge is also a precursor to power, rather than something that is simply added to power that results in how trustworthy one group is perceived to be (Farrell, 2004). Additionally, low or high quality engagement is not the end result of either approach. The quality of engagement finally results in some situation or action that occurs in the public engagement process. In a

prescriptive approach the sum of the concepts, factors, and variables can result in a delayed or stopped project. In a collaborative approach, it can result in a mutually beneficial project. These more clearly articulated relationships were used as the basis for designing the conceptual framework solution for the thesis. The solution for the thesis is presented and discussed in detail in the next section: Solution + Conclusions.

4. Solution + Conclusions



4. SOLUTION + CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Introduction

After analyzing the results of rapid prototypes and high fidelity prototypes, and upon reflecting on the various gaps that emerged in the prototypes, solution development was able to begin. The purpose of the solution development phase of the design process is to refine a high fidelity prototype into a deliverable solution (Martin, Hangington, 2012). The main concepts and factors that were further refined for solution development were: the various forms of knowledge that Urban Planners and Community Members each possess, the value they each place on their own forms of knowledge, what each group has the power to do, and the end result of the public engagement process in both prescriptive and collaborative approaches.

The forms of knowledge that Urban Planners possess and place a high value upon in the context of public engagement are:

Technical Skills:

Skills in the technical requirements for the design or implementation of projects for the use of public land, such as land use planning and zoning.

Urban Planning Process and Theory:

The various theoretical frameworks associated with the field of Urban Planning, as well as the processes required for executing Urban Planning work.

Public Agency System:

The governmental agencies, regulations, policies, and procedures associated with initiating, designing, and implementing Urban Planning initiatives. These agencies can be at the local, city, regional, state, and federal level.

(Bryson, Quick, 2013)





The forms of knowledge that Community Members possess and place a high value upon in the context of public engagement are:

Experiential Knowledge of Community Dynamics:

The everyday lived experience of residing in a specific community, including the physical space, the relationships between people, and the individuals who live there or visit. It encompasses the history, needs, priorities, and culture of the people in relation to the place.

Organizing and Activism:

Community Members often have a unique capacity for grassroots style organizing and activism. It is a knowledge and skill that was developed, often out of necessity, to advocate for themselves when their needs were not being met. It often comes as a result of not having access to some of the power and resources they need to ensure their own health and well-being.

Urban Planning Process and Theory:

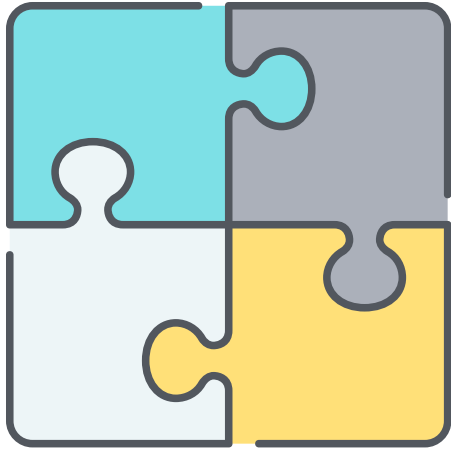
To some degree, Community Members can have knowledge of Urban Planning Process and Theory if they have access to literature or workshops. When they do have this type of knowledge, it typically occurs in areas that have a higher level of educational attainment. There are also cases in which some Community Members are employed in fields closely related to Urban Planning, such as Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Environmental Science.

(Ross, Leigh, 2000)

The definitions for collaboration and quality of engagement were also refined.

The term **Collaboration** has broad ranging definitions, but for the purpose of this solution, it is defined based on a participatory design approach. In a participatory design approach, collaboration entails people actively engaging in discussion and activities together, in order to generate ideas and solutions that are mutually beneficial (Sanders, 2007).

Quality of Engagement refers to how healthy and productive the process of engagement is. It is based on either group's enthusiasm for or willing interest in engaging the process.



4.2 Solution: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework answers the research question, How might Urban Planners understand the opportunities and challenges of involving Community Members through a public engagement process, in order to shift from a prescriptive approach to a collaborative approach? Urban Planners can use the conceptual framework to better understand the opportunities and challenges of involving Community Members. It is visualized to help them more deeply understand the complexity of their relationship with Community Members. The framework was designed to show which factors and variables correlate to impact the ability for Urban Planners and Community to collaborate, as well as how collaboration relates to the quality of public engagement. It illustrates this for both a prescriptive approach and a collaborative approach to public engagement, while also showing the end result of both approaches. The conceptual framework solution is shown on pages 74-75 and 78-79. It is explained in the following paragraphs.

Prescriptive Approach

One segment of the framework can help Urban Planners understand the nature of a prescriptive approach, as well as its results for public engagement. In this approach, Urban Planners place an increasing value on the forms of knowledge they possess, and an increasingly advanced capacity for those forms of knowledge. This results in their increasing level of power to push projects forward, regardless of Community Members' feedback or input, which then results in Community Members' decreasing level of trust towards Urban Planners.

In a prescriptive approach, Urban Planners are able to capitalize on the level of knowledge they have in the above mentioned areas of technical skills, Urban Planning process and theory, and public agency system. They also place a high value upon that knowledge, which can act to push a project forward. Their understanding of these areas of knowledge essentially gives them the expertise to make a project happen. They have the knowledge

and skill set of how to access and use the various resources that are required to initiate, design, and implement a project (Bryson, Quick, 2013). The level of mistrust that Community Members have towards Urban Planners comes into play as a result of this power. Urban Planners have the power to push a project forward, regardless of whether they make a reasonable effort to engage the Community and get their feedback on the project. When a project goes forward with minimal or no Community engagement, the Community Members become mistrustful of Urban Planners. They feel as though their input is not valued and does not matter in the process. It would then seem as though Urban Planners are primarily concerned with achieving their own objectives for the project, and do not truly consider, nor care, how it might impact the Community (Lauria, Long, 2017).

The roles can also be reversed in a prescriptive approach, wherein Urban Planners come to mistrust Community Members. The sequence is the same as above, yet the specific factors are a

bit different. As mentioned above, the forms of knowledge that Community Members possess and place a high value upon are experiential knowledge of community dynamics, organizing and activism, and to some degree, Urban Planning process and theory. Using these various forms of knowledge, Community Members have the power to stop projects from advancing to subsequent design phases or construction. The Community can have power in numbers over Urban Planners and the agencies they work for, which is where they would leverage their knowledge of organizing and activism. They can also use this knowledge together with their knowledge of community dynamics. They have a direct connection to the community itself, thus have ready access to reaching out to and organizing other people within the community.

There are many examples of communities launching fairly sophisticated grassroots campaigns to oppose and delay projects. Often times this occurs as a reaction to not being equally engaged in the process, or having their views dismissed when they

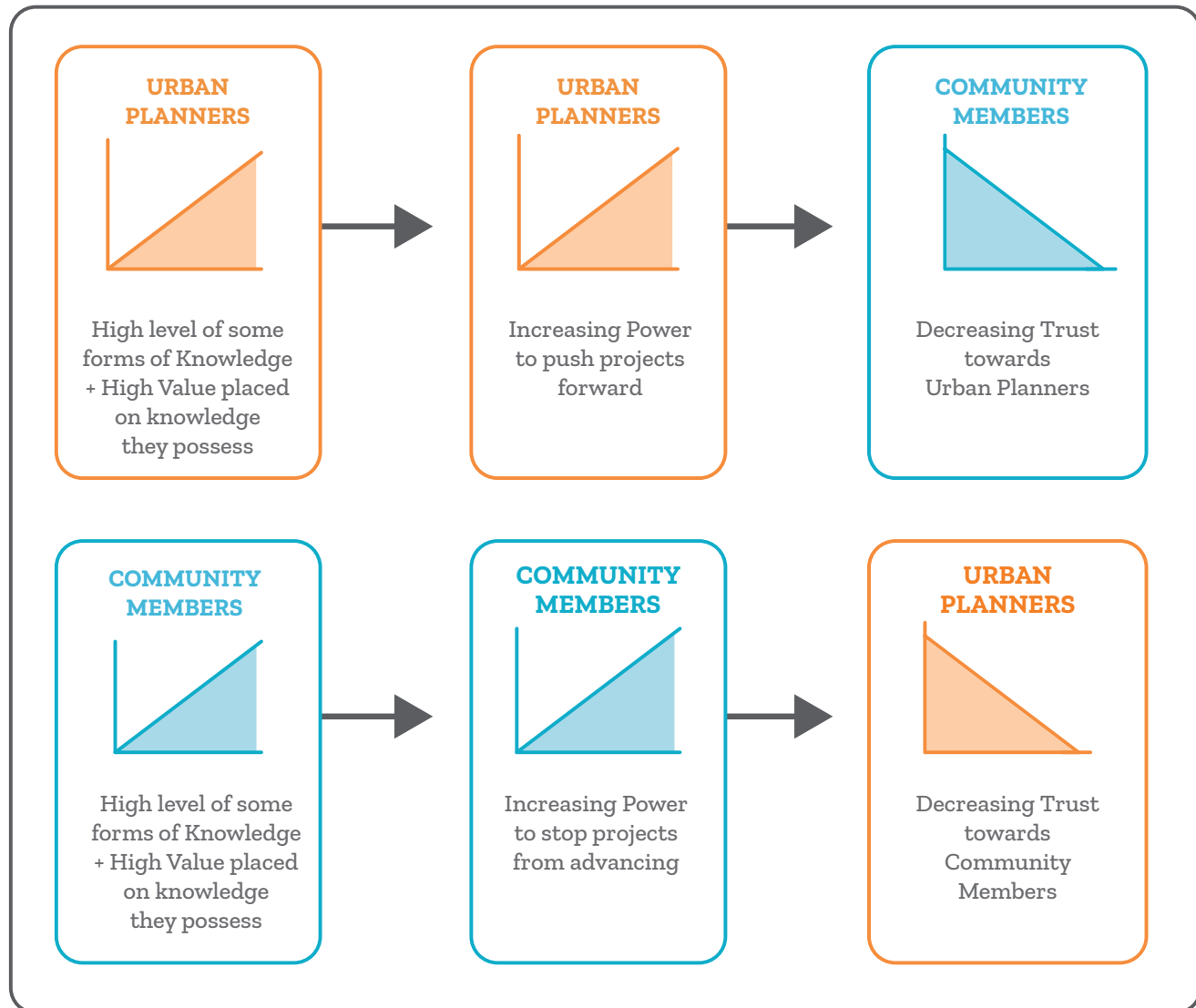
were engaged. In very highly charged situations, Community Members have retained the help of legal teams who focus on social justice issues. Or if their issues are related to environmental impacts, they have the ability to retain environmental lawyers to delay or stop projects. Sometimes legal teams will work pro-bono to represent the Community (Suskind, 1980).

As a result of this power to delay or stop a project, Urban Planners can feel mistrustful towards Community Members. They have a view that their value in the process loses relevancy, and that the public's main goal is to oppose them or stop the project. They feel a loss of credibility and that their expertise is overpowered by the capacity of the public to organize themselves and to enlist the help of other experts who are "on their side" (Duarte, 2014).

Any of these situations that lead to the mistrust of either Urban Planners or Community Members will negatively impact the public engagement process for both groups. The ability to collaborate through the process becomes weakened as the level of trust for either or both groups decreases. Mistrust creates animosity and oppositional relationships, where groups become focused on "winning" over the other group. They will then stop focusing on achieving something mutually beneficial together. When collaboration is weak, it leads to an overall low quality of engagement. It leads to tension and animosity between the groups, and an unstable and unhealthy quality. If attempts to collaborate are met with unease, tension, and conflict, it gets increasingly difficult to communicate or achieve goals.

When no resolution can be reached, as a result of weak collaboration and low quality of engagement, it can lead to a delayed project. If no resolution can be reached it might stop the project indefinitely. At this point, legal teams might be retained by both groups to settle any disputes. This is ultimately an extremely costly and time consuming result, which also perpetuates the damages of the relationship between the groups (Lauria, Long, 2017).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH



WEAK COLLABORATION

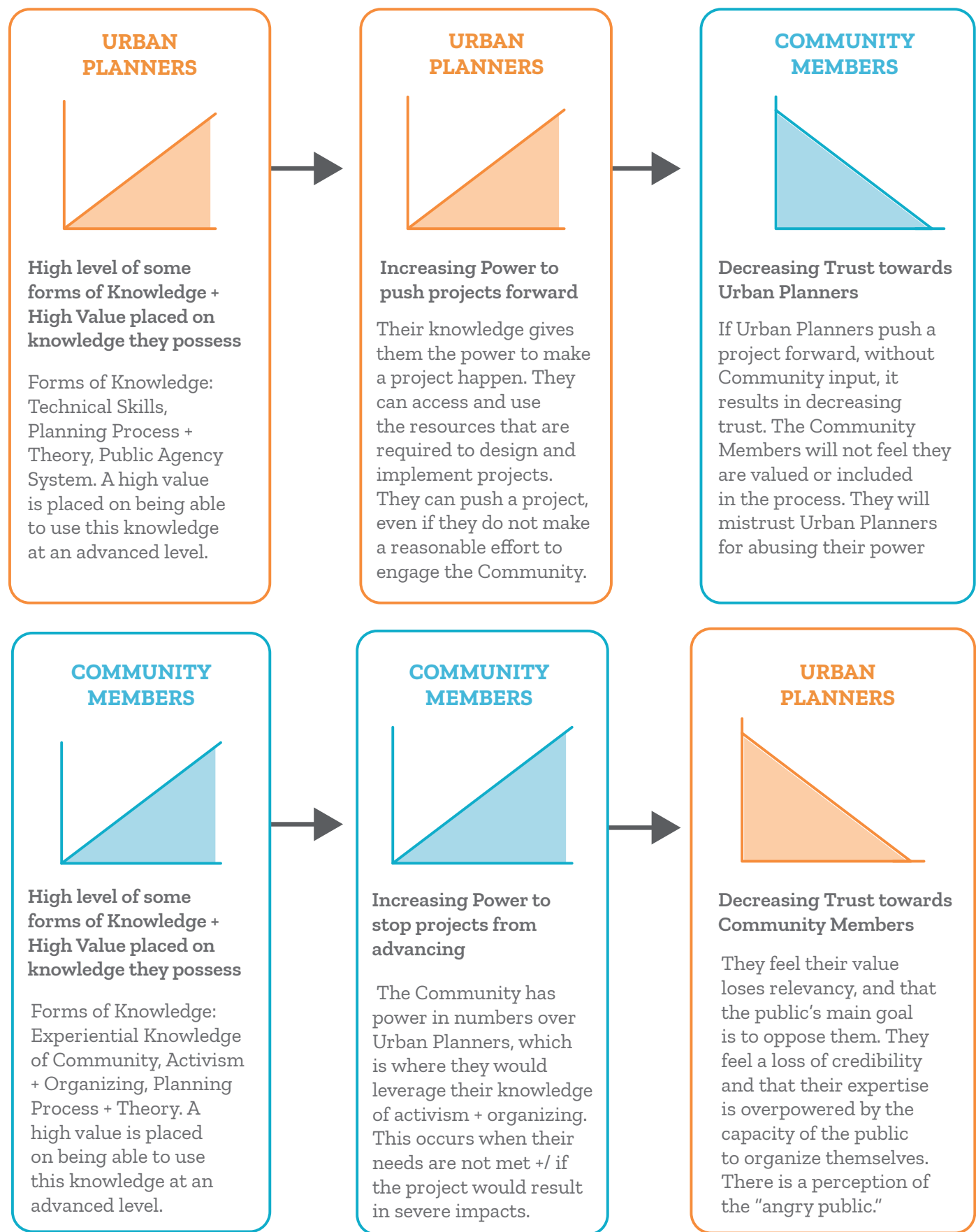
Collaboration means actively working together to generate mutually beneficial outcomes or solutions. As trust diminishes, the capacity for collaboration to occur diminishes. Mistrust creates animosity and oppositional relationships, where groups become focused on “winning” over the other group. They will then stop focusing on achieving something mutually beneficial together.

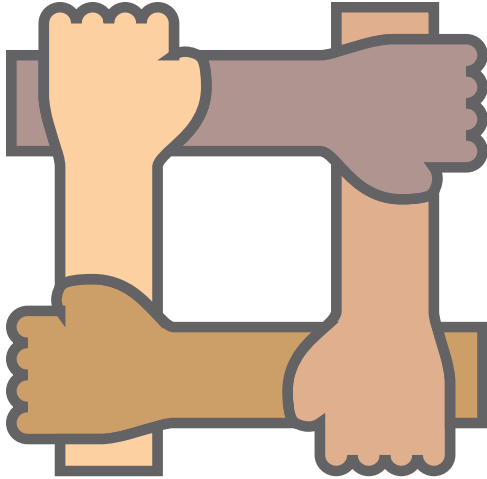
LOW QUALITY OF ENGAGEMENT

Quality of engagement refers to how healthy and productive the process of engagement is. It is based on either group’s access to, positive enthusiasm for, or willing interest in the process. If the ability to collaborate is diminished, the quality of engagement also goes down. If attempts to collaborate are met with unease, tension, and conflict, it gets more difficult to communicate or achieve goals. When one or both groups do not want to engage, the process can stagnate.

DELAYED OR STOPPED PROJECT

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH DETAILS





Collaborative Approach

The other segment of the framework can help Urban Planners understand the nature of a collaborative approach, as well as its results for public engagement. In a collaborative approach, Both groups would feel empowered to use the type of knowledge they possess. Each of their forms of knowledge can be highly valued as being beneficial for the process. The various forms of knowledge each group has could work to supplement any gaps in knowledge others have. They could then feel more empowered to educate the other group on forms of knowledge they do not already possess or know little about. For example, something like The Peoples' Planning Academy discussed earlier might be a way to educate Community Members further about Urban Planning Process and its theory.

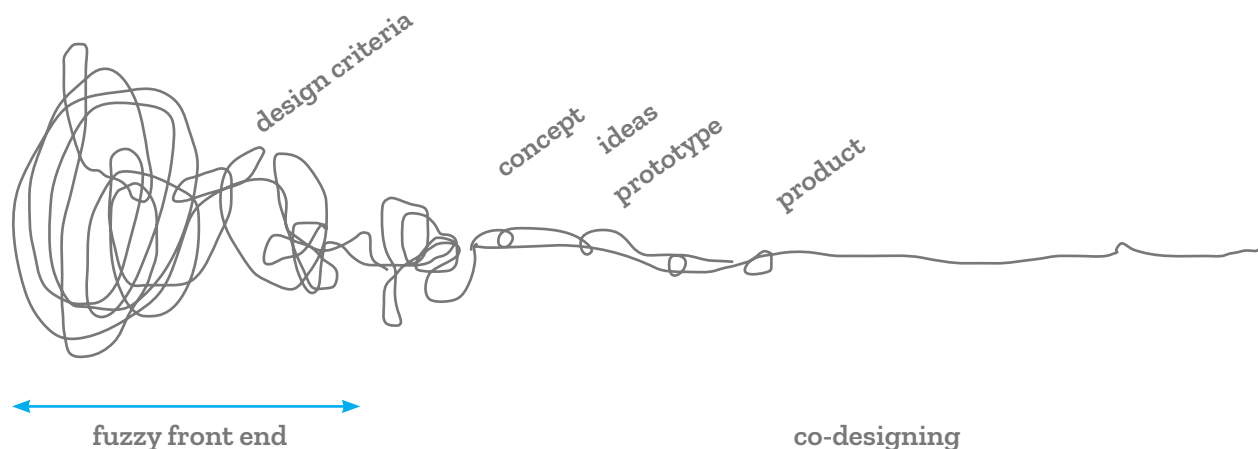
One group's high knowledge does not have to equal a lack of power for the other group. When both groups' knowledge is highly valued, this gives each group a high level of mutual power from which they can work. In a collaborative approach, power is based on mutual strength, rather than on control or exclusion like in a prescriptive approach. Mutual power can help groups to work towards building trust, in order to gain a strong outcome, instead of creating a tension between trying to pushing forward a harmful project and stopping that project.

When there is a strong level of mutual power, neither group will feel as though they are at a disadvantage in the process. They will feel more equally respected and trust that the other group places a value on their interests as well. This leads to both groups viewing that the other is reliable. As trust increases, the capacity for strong collaboration to occur also increases. High mutual trust creates a foundation of respect for each group's needs and goals. Groups become equal participants in the process, and so are willing to work together for meaningful outcomes.

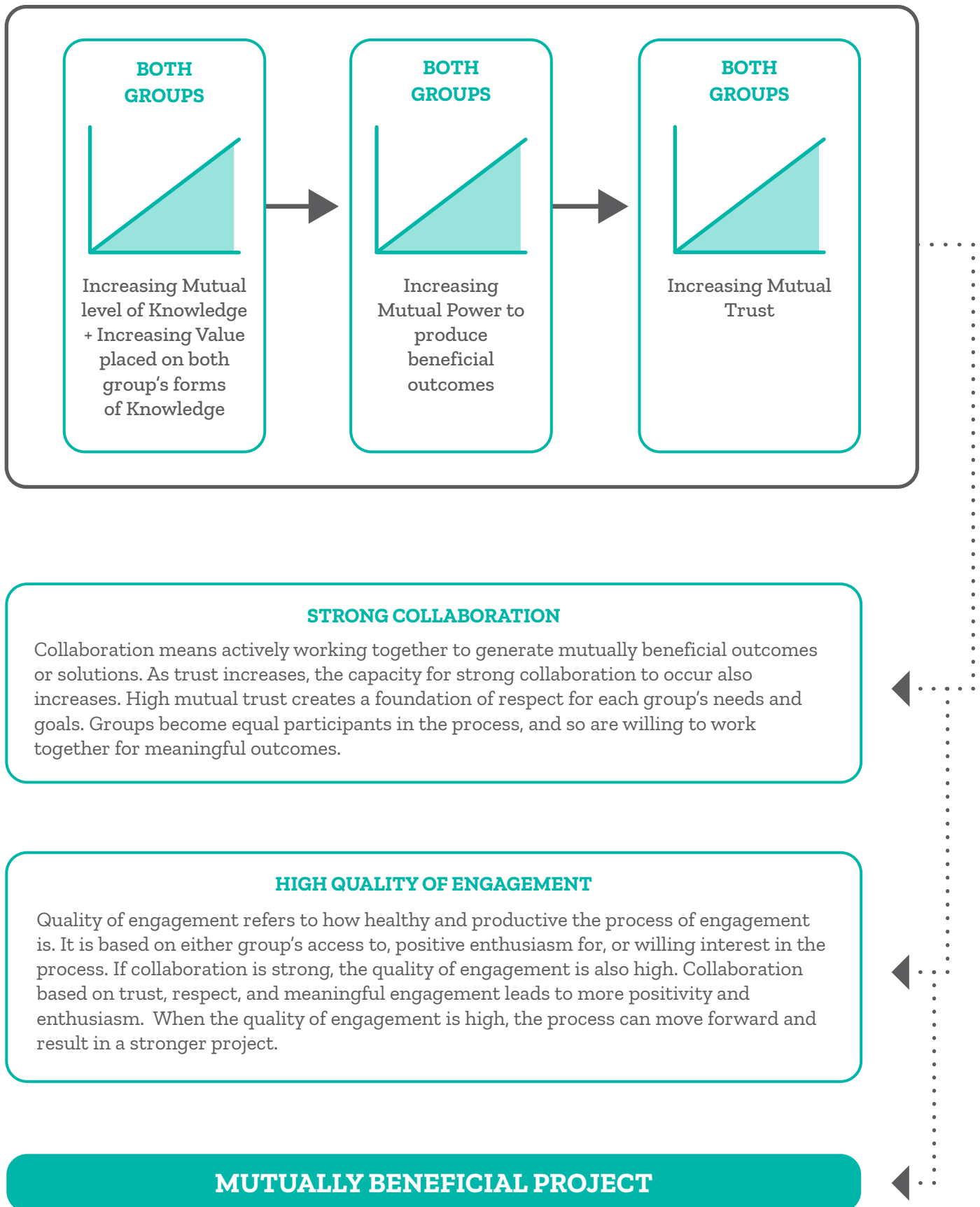
If collaboration is strong, the quality of engagement is also high. Collaboration based on trust, respect, and meaningful engagement leads to more positivity and enthusiasm. When the quality of engagement is high, the process can move forward and result in a stronger project that benefits both groups. Instead of stopping the process and the project in an oppositional manner, they have established a healthy collaborative relationship. The process will likely be more streamlined and efficient, as well as result in positive perceptions on both sides.

Why will the conceptual framework be informed by Collaborative Design?

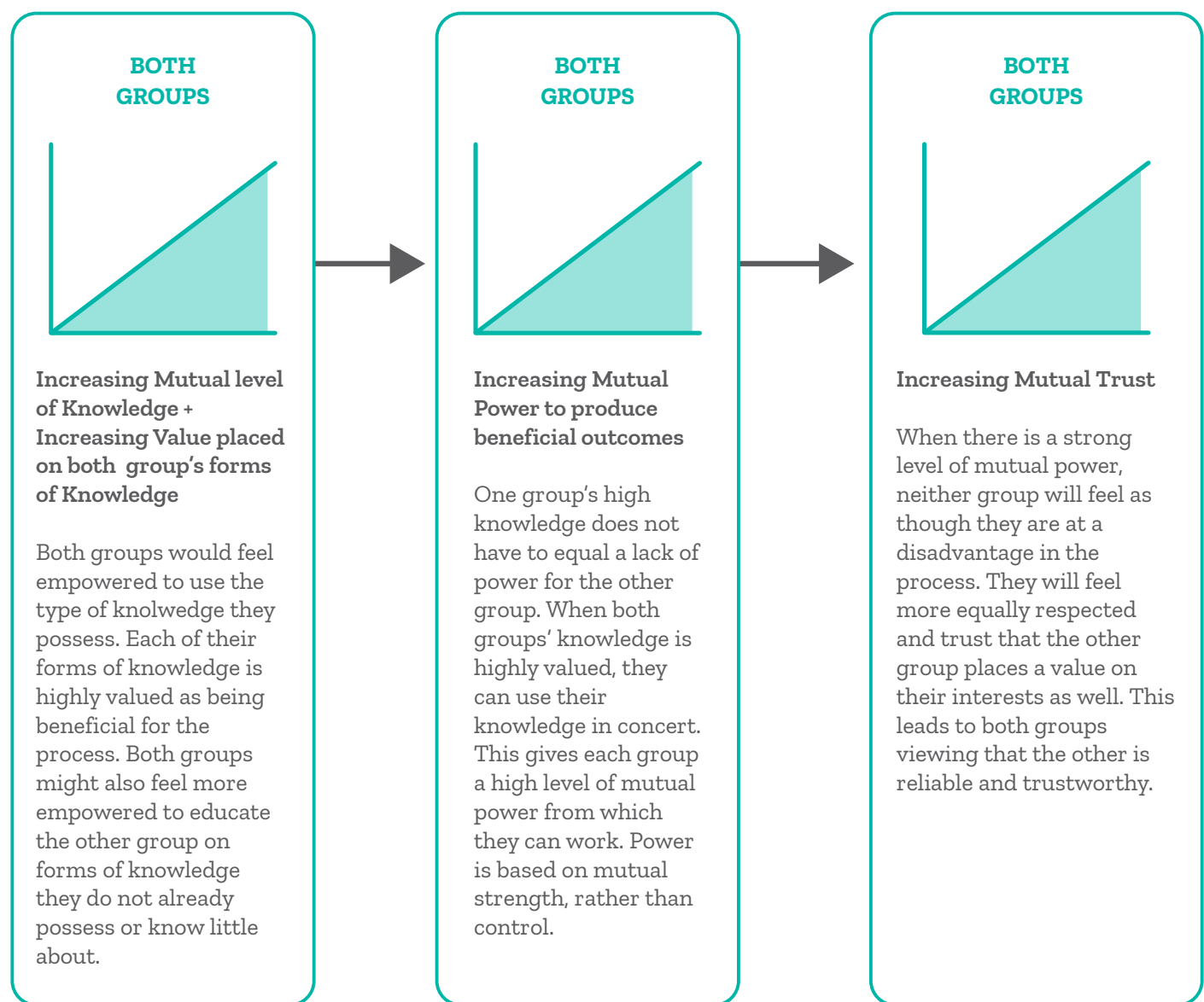
A Collaborative Design approach allows participants to come on board much earlier, in the generative phases of design, which traditional approaches to public engagement have not typically done. Prescriptive approaches have involved Community Members at later phases of the process, when plans or projects are already nearing final design.



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: COLLABORATIVE APPROACH



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: COLLABORATIVE APPROACH DETAILS





4.3 Conclusions

The framework was created at a conceptual level so it would be appropriate for use in a variety of geographic locations and Urban Planning settings within the United States. The literature reviewed and research conducted was limited to the United States, so the solution may not be appropriate for use in other countries, if they have different processes of engagement and Urban Planning policies.

Instead of focusing on methods for resolving specific sources of mistrust, knowledge gaps, and power gaps, the framework is meant to provide a conceptual understanding for how each of these factors correlate with one another in public engagement. Conceptual frameworks can be used to guide people in their approach to further research or practice (Imenda, 2014).

A collaborative approach is presented in the framework as a way to resolve many of the tensions that exist in prescriptive approaches. This is not to say it is an exact antidote in opposition to all of the challenges of a prescriptive approach, but that the factors and relationships in a collaborative approach can be very effective for fostering a mutually beneficial public engagement process. Collaborative design was specifically chosen as the approach that would inform the design of the framework, due to the ways in which the basis of the approach may

resolve many of the same challenges that exist in public engagement settings. Often the factors are similar, which includes equalizing power relations; democratic practices; situation-based actions; mutual learning; and equitable access to tools and techniques. It is common that the contexts in which collaborative design is used include diverse groups of stakeholders with differing interests and priorities (Björgvinsson, 2012). Sanders states that, close collaboration is increasingly important when there are various stakeholders who inevitably come to the process with a variety of backgrounds and hybrid skills. She goes on to state that, in the planning and architectural fields, there is a communication gap between the design team, the various levels of “user groups” and the wide array of consultants to the process. As such, collaborative design can be used to support and facilitate communication across diverse user groups (Sanders, 2008). Collaborative design is fundamentally based upon creating equitable outcomes together, while deeply considering the various human factors that impact the ways in which people work together (Lee, 2014).

4.4 Opportunities for Further Research

There are several opportunities for further research that could act as a supplement the work presented and the solution that was developed in this thesis. Urban Planners might conduct a needs assessment in collaboration with Community Members, to learn more about their priorities and how to balance them, to ensure any further public engagement work is appropriate for them. Based on the needs assessment, Urban Planners and Community Members might develop specific methods and action plans to achieve a higher quality of engagement and a more collaborative approach. They might focus their methods to help resolve any challenges that are directly relevant to the contexts in which they work, which might not have been examined in this research. Additionally, as the scope of this research stops at presenting a solution, the conceptual framework will not be implemented in professional Urban Planning settings. Further opportunities for research could include development of a process and action plan for implementing the conceptual framework, as well as a process for evaluating and testing the framework in professional Urban Planning settings. To keep consistent with the collaborative approach proposed for the framework, these processes could also be researched and developed collaboratively by design researchers and Urban Planners.



Glossary

Advocacy Planning - An approach to Urban Planning that seeks to have Urban Planners democratize the process of urban planning by working on behalf of communities that have been underrepresented. It also posits that communities should be given resources that will help them understand the technical aspects of planning, in order to be able to offer appropriate feedback. In this approach, resources should generally be provided to communities by planners themselves.

Cisgender - A person who identifies their gender according to the biological sex they were assigned at birth, according to what society has deemed a gender binary, in which only two binary genders are recognized as legitimate, woman or man.

Collaborative Design - An approach to collective creativity, in which both designers and non-designers collaborate throughout the span of the design process to create an outcome, product, or service.

Collaborative Approach - In this research, the term refers to an approach to public engagement that is strongly influenced by Participatory Design. Participatory Design posits that people are the experts of their own experiences, needs, and hopes. People should be actively engaged throughout a process for the design of products or services they will use, to ensure the products or services are appropriate. In this case, the service is the public engagement process, which directly impacts the outcomes of plans or projects for the Community's use of public space.

Community Members - Members of the public who are residents and who will be impacted by a project or plan that is initiated by a public agency. The terms Community Members and Public will be used interchangeably throughout this document.

Culture - Culture is used in this paper to define a collective group of people who live in the same community neighborhood. The general definition of culture is the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art, from one generation to the next.

Cultural Probes - A set of tools developed by Gaver, Dunne, and Pacenti that are intended to help designers become familiar with a new culture, usually at the start of a project. They often include a package of items that participants use to tell stories and visually communicate the reality and context of their everyday lives.

Designer - Professionals + Researchers within the field of Design who facilitate people through the design process, to help them generate creative solutions.

Empathic Design - An approach to design developed in Finland. It embodies sensitivity towards humans, sensitivity towards design, sensitivity towards techniques, and sensitivity towards collaboration. Empathic design uses the everyday lived experiences of people, including their desires, moods, and emotions, as inspiration for their designs.

Equity Planning - An approach that expands upon advocacy planning, by proposing development of policies to redistribute public resources, power, and participation to underrepresented groups. In this approach, the planner's role is less of a technical expert, in favor of a steward who promotes social responsibility and balance of power.

Generative Tools - A type of tools that help participants visually communicate their ideas. They allow people to translate abstract ideas into a more tangible form, often through cultural probes, drawing, crafts supplies, and visual storytelling.

Individual Racism - An individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviours that is a form of racial discrimination that stems from conscious and unconscious, personal prejudice. It is connected to and learned from broader socio-economic histories and processes, while being supported and reinforced by institutional racism.

Institutional Racism - Refers to the policies of the dominant race at the institutional level. The behavior, beliefs, and actions of those who control these institutions and implement policies have a differential and/or harmful effect upon minority racial and ethnic groups. It can either be deliberate or based upon unconscious bias, yet has harmful consequences either way.

Method - Procedures and activities used in the field of design, at different phases, to engage with participants. Methods are used to elicit information, ideas, and solutions from participants throughout the design process.

Methodology - A system of compatible methods based in the ideology of a particular area of study or activity.

Participant - People who work with professional Designers to come up with creative solutions to a perceived problem they are having.

Participatory Design - An approach to design, developed in Scandinavia in the 1970's, that actively involve all stakeholders (e.g. employees, partners, customers, citizens, end users) in the design process to help ensure the result meets their needs and is usable.

Power Differential - The additional level of role power had by people in positions of authority.

Prescriptive Approach - This refers to a traditional approach to public engagement that is primarily designed and implemented by Urban Planners to inform the public about a plan or project for the use of public land. Prescriptive approaches typically involve the public minimally throughout the process, or very late in the process, towards the final stages of design. The process is driven by Planners without significant public consultation. Community needs and goals are generally not deeply considered or implemented into the final design of the plan or project.

Public Engagement Process - The process by which Urban Planners engage the Community Members as stakeholders in projects for the built environment or master plans that are initiated by public agencies and will impact public resources, services, or facilities. The extent to which Planners engage Community Members varies based on their selected approach.

Quality of Engagement - How healthy and productive the process of engagement is. It is based on either group's enthusiasm for or willing interest in engaging the process.

Qualitative Research - A form of exploratory research that is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, values, beliefs, and motivations of research participants.

Quantitative Research - A form of research that emphasizes objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data, often collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys.

Structural Racism - Sometimes used interchangeably with institutional racism. Societal structures and institutions that may be overtly or subtly racist in their conception or have inherently racist outcomes, even if those outcomes were not part of their stated original design or intent

Trans - A person whose gender identity does not align with the gender that society recognizes as corresponding with the biological sex they were assigned at birth. The biological sex (female, male, or intersex) that one is assigned at birth is generally designated based on physical anatomy and chromosomal makeup.

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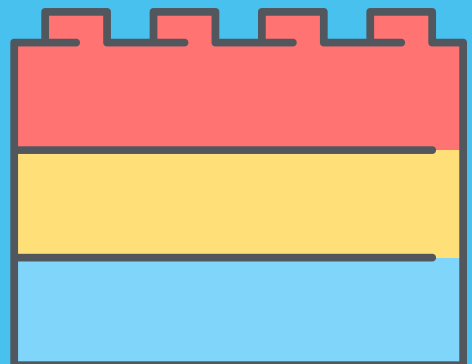
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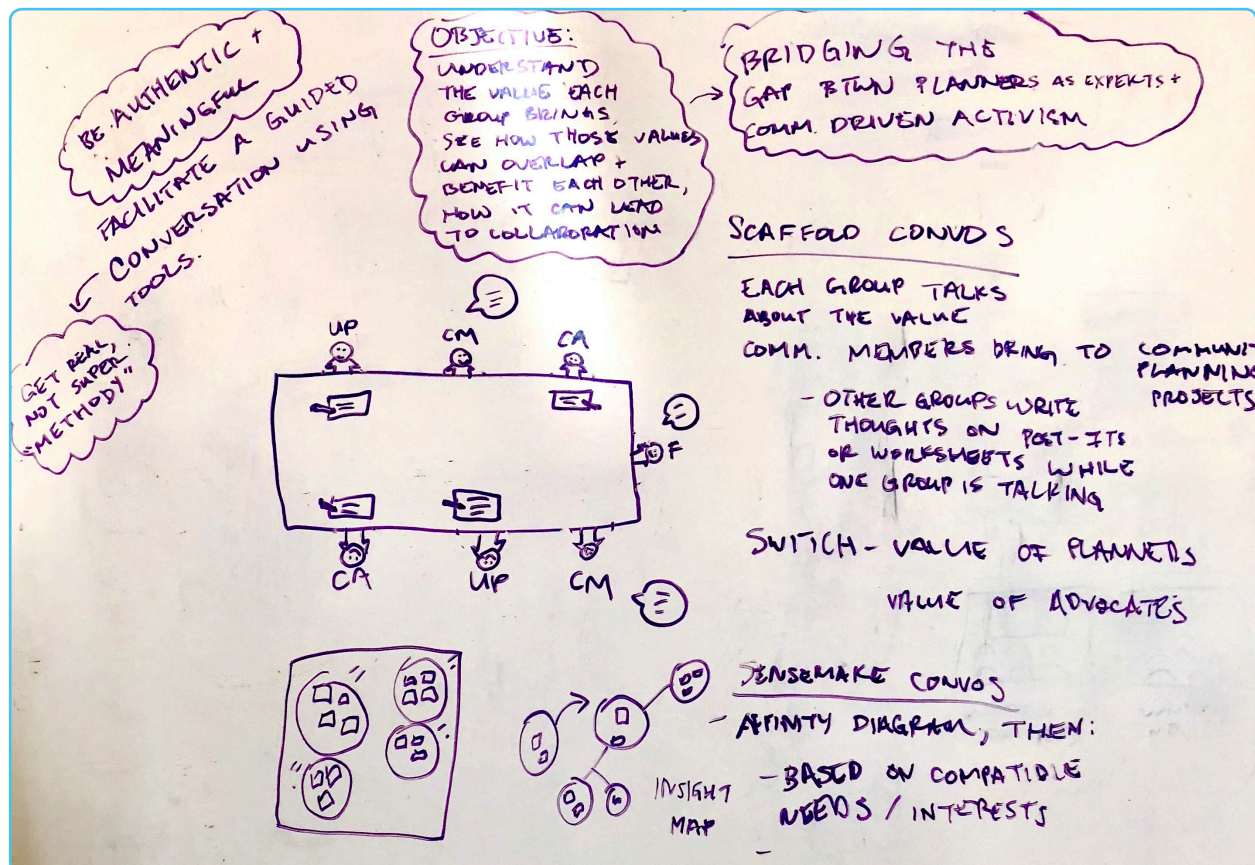
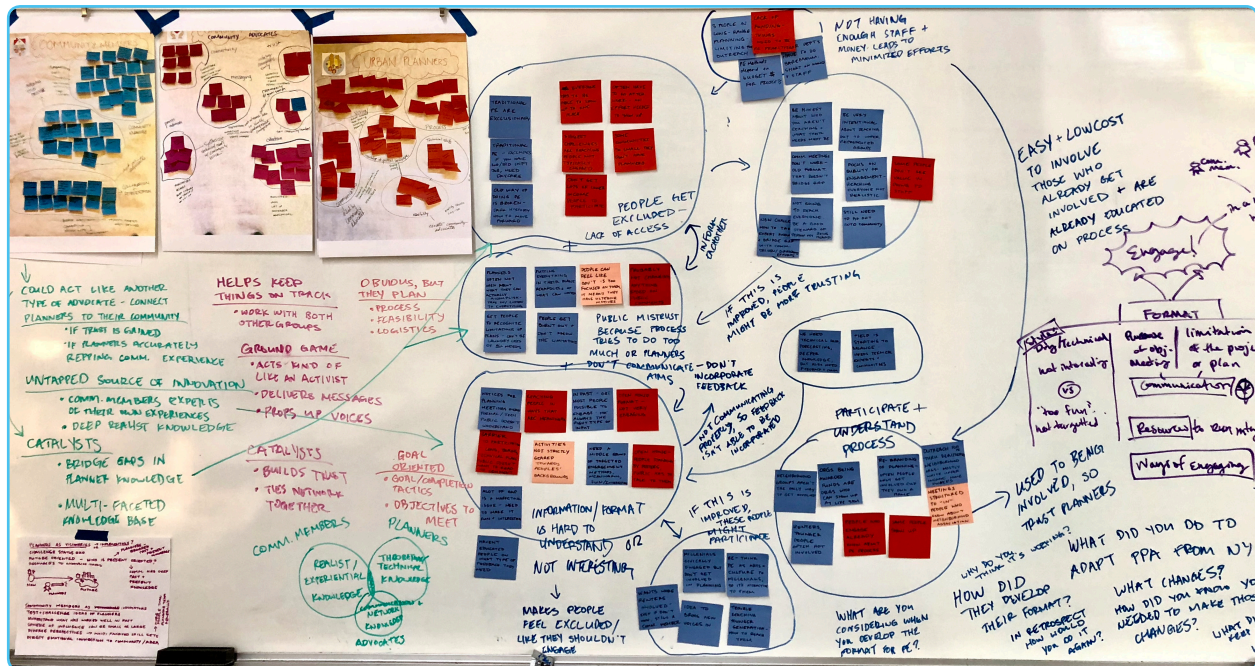
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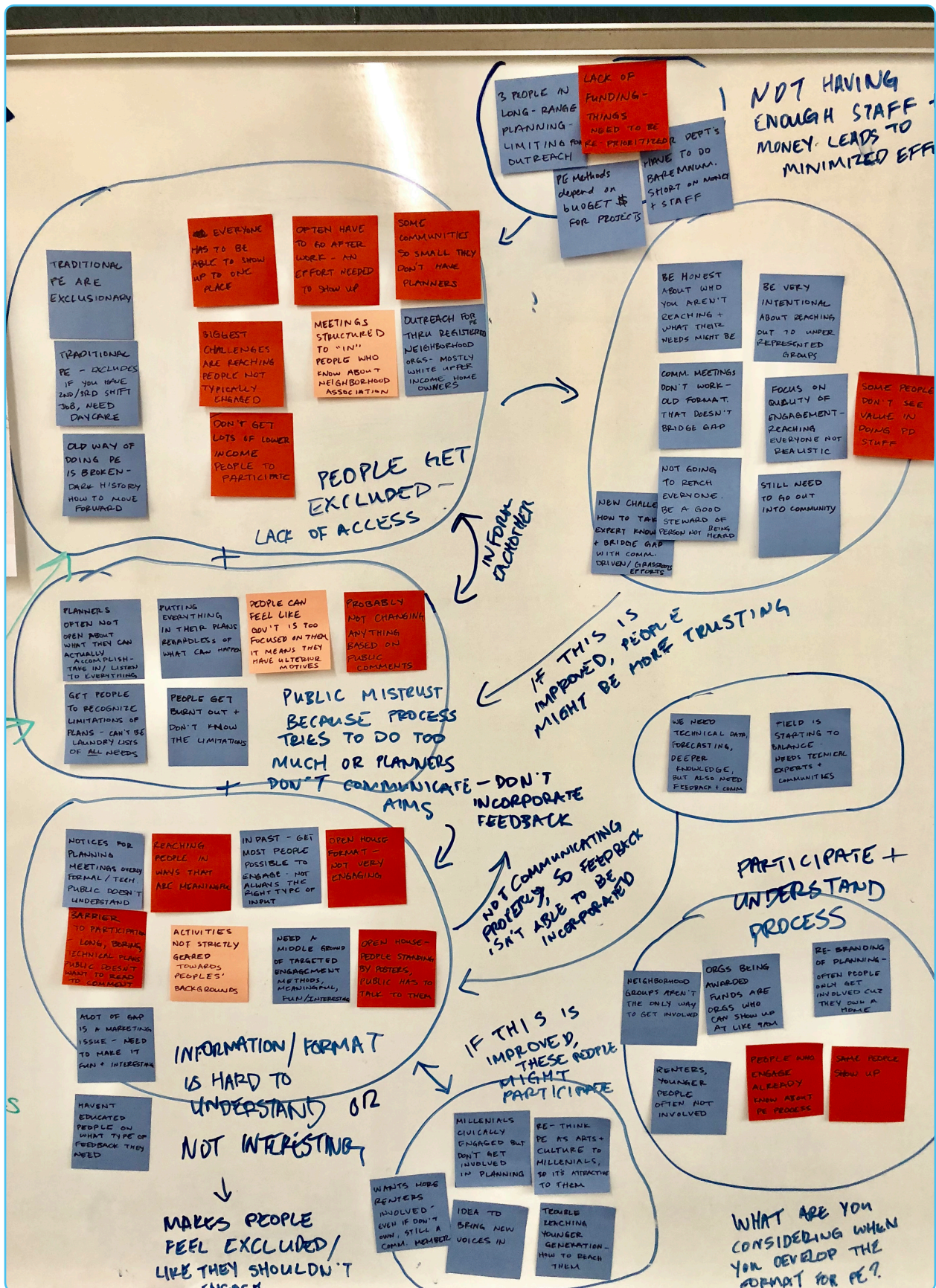
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Appendix



Urban Planner Interviews: Affinity Diagrams of Data





Participatory Design Session: Worksheets for Community Assets Roundtable



The value that **community members** have and can offer is...



The value that **community advocates** have and can offer is...



The value that **urban planners** have and can offer is...

Participatory Design Session :Worksheets for HMW Statements



Developing Insights

Based on the themes and categories you came up with in the affinity diagramming activity, come up with insights for how each of the community groups can work together to benefit each other. Which of the values or resources from each group would work well for collaboration between the groups or to help fill in where one group might have a challenge? Write some statements below that articulate each of your insights - stick to one sentence for each insight.

How might urban planners + community advocates build structures to reach under-represented populations?

How might urban planners involve community members more in the beginning of the process?

How do we help community members develop the language & skills for more meaningful engagement?



Developing Insights

Based on the themes and categories you came up with in the affinity diagramming activity, come up with insights for how each of the community groups can work together to benefit each other. Which of the values or resources from each group would work well for collaboration between the groups or to help fill in where one group might have a challenge? Write some statements below that articulate each of your insights - stick to one sentence for each insight.

How can we Create digestible information from planners to be pushed out through community advocates to reach under represented community members?

How might we develop a program that empowers community members to act as advocates so that they can effectively leverage their voices to urban planners.



Developing Insights

Based on the themes and categories you came up with in the affinity diagramming activity, come up with insights for how each of the community groups can work together to benefit each other. Which of the values or resources from each group would work well for collaboration between the groups or to help fill in where one group might have a challenge? Write some statements below that articulate each of your insights - stick to one sentence for each insight.

How might the urban planners change the public participation process?

How might community members help urban planners change the participation process so they are more involved?

How might community advocates help urban planners standardize participation so community members know what to expect?

How might urban planners develop messaging to increase public participation?



Developing Insights

Based on the themes and categories you came up with in the affinity diagramming activity, come up with insights for how each of the community groups can work together to benefit each other. Which of the values or resources from each group would work well for collaboration between the groups or to help fill in where one group might have a challenge? Write some statements below that articulate each of your insights - stick to one sentence for each insight.

How might community advocates work with community members & planners to develop comm. volunteer advocate programs?

Urban planners & community advocates might be more transparent as a means of improving trust & collaboration w/comm. members.

Community advocates can work with both parties to develop distribution channels & better define the challenge of outreach.

By initiating conversations early & outside the planning process, advocates might work with the community to learn how to better represent them.

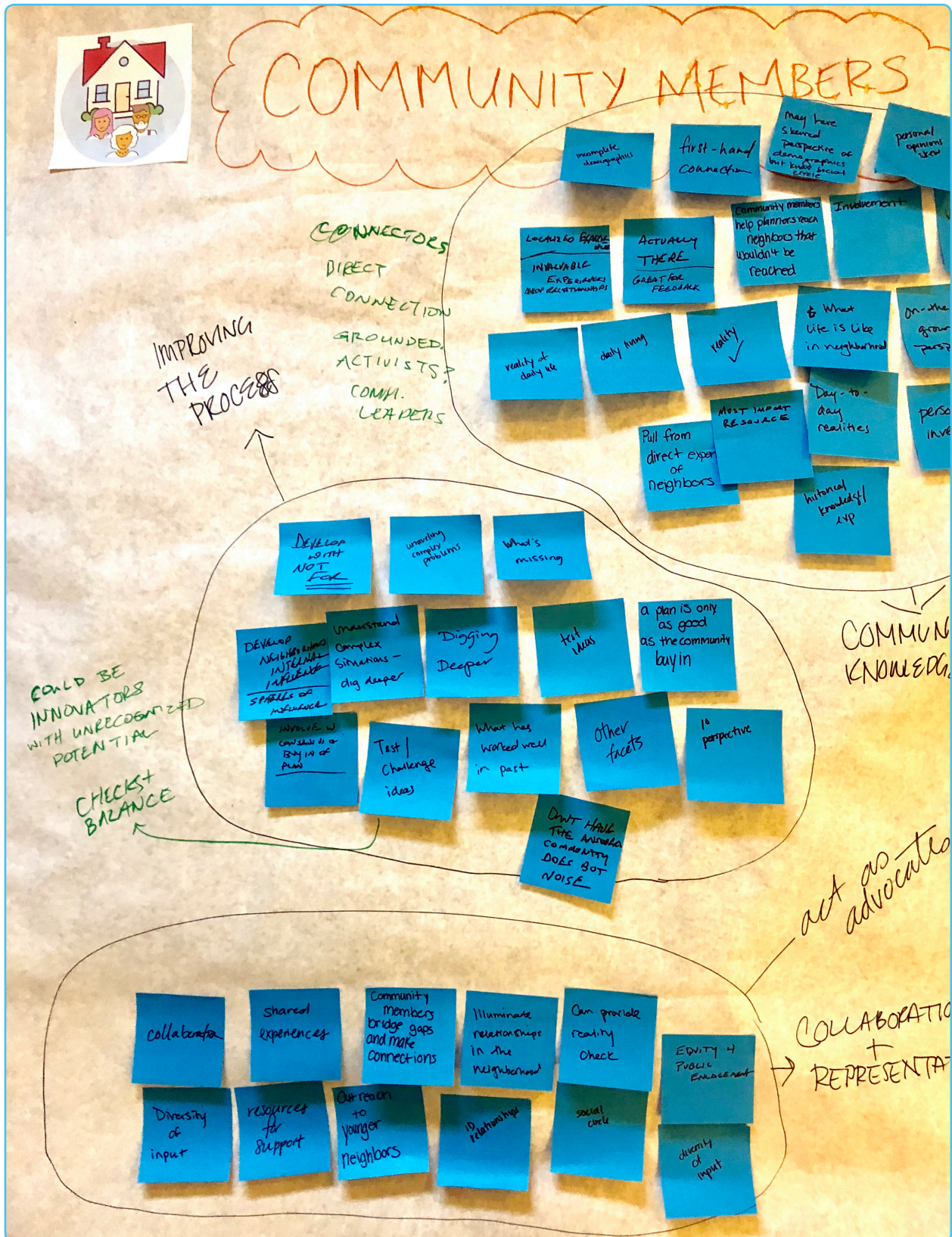
Urban Planners & Community advocates can work together to voice the needs of community representation to key decision makers in the political sphere - like setting aside funding for outreach, etc.

adequate

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Participatory Design Session: Community Member Affinity Diagram



Participatory Design Session: Urban Planner Affinity Diagram



