



# ROAD TO THE COMMUNITY PLAN

**Prepared in partnership with**  
Macalester-Groveland Community Council  
City of Saint Paul

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**2013**

**KNCBR Report #**

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## COMPANION GUIDE

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# PROJECT SUMMARY

In the summer of 2013, the Macalester-Groveland Community Council (MGCC) initiated their Community Plan process. Their primary goal was to effectively engage the community & accurately reflect their interests in the plan. The leaders of the Community Council recognized that they needed to be strategic about their engagement & provide opportunities for underrepresented groups to be engaged.

Additionally, the City of Saint Paul was interested in assisting district councils understand the elements of the

plan to make the review & approval process more efficient & to derive at a plan that the community can use to steward future development.

Thus, this project is a collaboration between MGCC & the City of Saint Paul to create a road map that illustrates key steps as a guide for communities to reference as they embark on their community plan process.

The information on the 'Road Map' & this 'Companion

Guide' is a result of research conducted through a literature review of community planning best practices & plan elements, focus group interviews of district council staff, individual interviews of community organizations & personal observations of MGCC leadership meetings. This Companion Guide also includes documentation of the aforementioned process & will be of particular interest to district councils & community members seeking additional information.

## NOTE:

These documents are tools intended to offer best practices & insights to guide the conversation between district councils & their respective communities as they develop their own unique approaches to the community plan. Users are encouraged to interpret & utilize these tools as they see fit.

## LEGEND

### Navigating The Road Map

This marker represents the stage we are in on our path to the Community Plan. Each marker in this guide corresponds to the Road Map, providing additional information.

### Types of Engagement

This icon represents a tool using basic verbal communication.

VERBAL

This icon represents a tool using creative & artistic media and usually involves multiple methods.

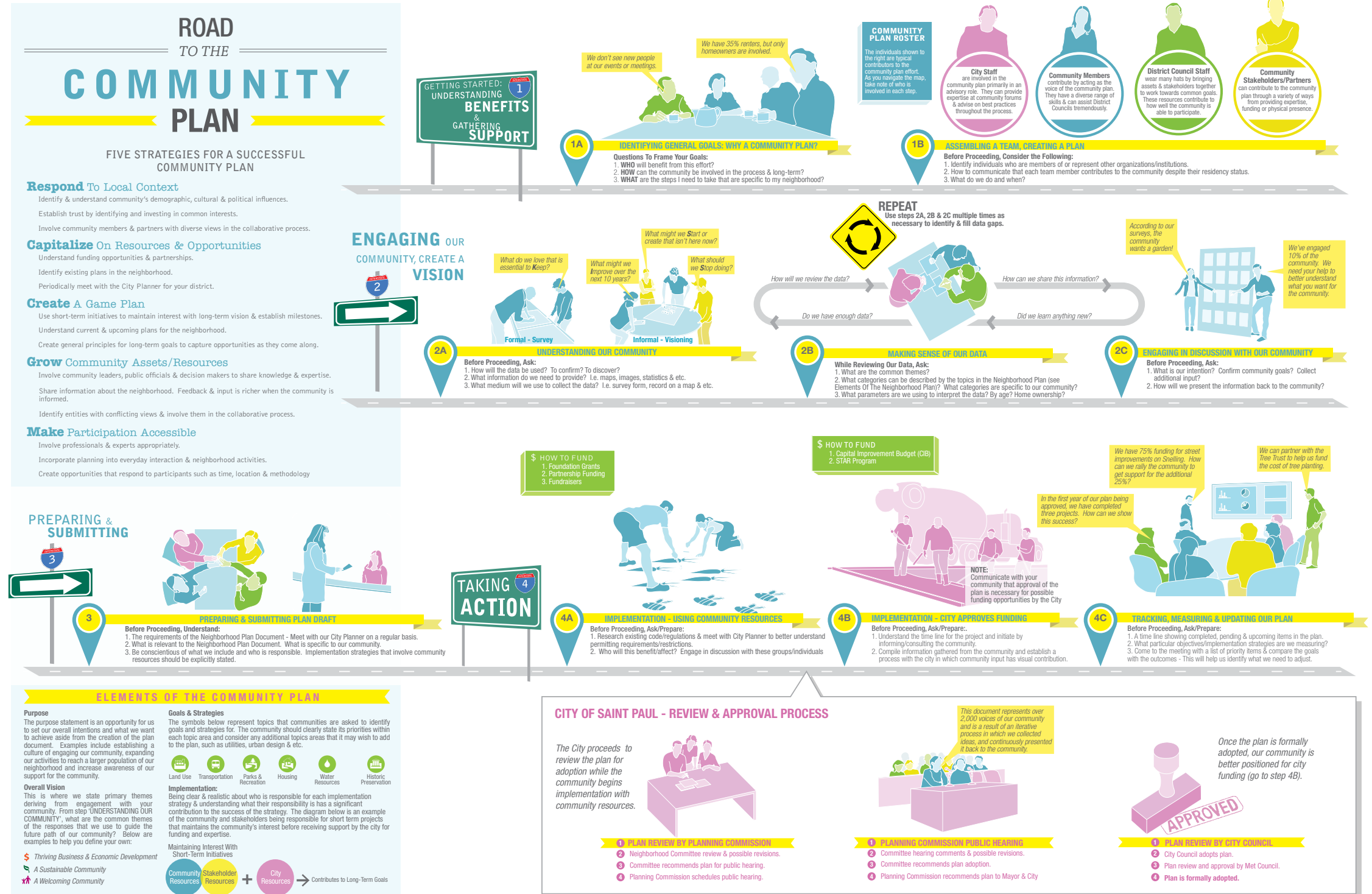
CREATIVE

This icon represents a tool that uses written language, multi-media & social media.

MEDIA

This icon represents a tool that uses human observation & interaction as means of engagement.

EXPERIENTIAL





## 1A IDENTIFYING GENERAL GOALS: WHY A COMMUNITY PLAN?

### TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED

#### SUGGESTED:

- District council staff
- Community members

#### OPTIONAL:

- Community partners/stakeholders
- City staff (advisory role)
- Opportunity to inform public officials about the community's values & activities
- Increase citizen involvement, development of resident leadership, & knowledge about commitment to neighborhood
- Opportunity for the community to engage with itself - to discover new relationships & to strengthen existing ones (see Appendix B for additional information)

### BENEFITS TO HELP US DEFINE OUR GOALS

- City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Current Community Plan
- Small Area Plans for our neighborhood
- Proposed development plans

### TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE

## APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:

### Respond To Local Context

WHO...

...will benefit from this effort?

...are the people of this community that are not represented on our Board or committees?

WHAT...

...are the steps we need to take that are specific to our neighborhood?

Example 1: "Our community is diverse - we need to better understand these different groups before engaging."

Example 2: "Our community is pretty homogenous - we should identify the smaller groups that we usually don't see at meetings or events."

### Capitalize On Resources & Opportunities

WHAT...

...are the trends & activities of our community?

Example 1: "Our community has an increasing population of college students & seniors - we should consider engaging the community regarding possible options for student & senior housing."

Example 2: "Everyone seems to travel outside the neighborhood for recreation - we should consider a partnership with the Parks & Rec. Department to help us understand what our options are in creating more recreation spaces within the community."

HOW...

...can the community be involved short-term & long-term?

Example 1: "We have several summer & fall events including National Night Out block parties - these would be good opportunities to gather general input."

Example 2: "We have annual Alley Garden Awards - we can have a bike tour open to the entire community to celebrate this program & periodically engage the community regarding bike infrastructure."



**City Staff**  
are involved in the community plan primarily in an advisory role. They can provide expertise at community forums & advise on best practices throughout the process.



**Community Members**  
contribute by acting as the voice of the community plan. They have a diverse range of skills & can assist District Councils tremendously.



**District Council Staff**  
wear many hats by bringing assets & stakeholders together to work towards common goals. These resources contribute to how well the community is able to participate.



**Community Stakeholders/Partners**  
can contribute to the community plan through a variety of ways from providing expertise, funding or manpower.



## ASSEMBLING A TEAM, CREATING A PLAN

### TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED

SUGGESTED:

- District council staff
- Community members

OPTIONAL:

- Community partners/stakeholders

### TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE:

- Stakeholder map or directory
- Block club map
- Volunteer directory
- Census data

## APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:

### Respond To Local Context

WHO...

- ...do we need to hear from?
- ...is our target audience (community members, public officials, etc.)?
- ...will be responsible for collecting the information?
- ...do we already know?

WHAT...

- ...are the key (or initial) questions we want to ask the community?
- Think about what questions we can ask to quickly identify themes or help us organize the responses we will get.
- Consider the following:

#### SWOT

**Strengths:** What assets/resources do we have? What do we do well?

**Weaknesses:** What do we need? What could we do better?

**Opportunities:** What are trends we can capitalize on? What opportunities can we explore?

**Threats:** What is keeping us from progressing? Are our weaknesses making us vulnerable?

#### PARK

**Preserve:** What do we have now that is positive?

**Add:** What do we not have that is positive?

**Remove:** What do we have that is negative?

**Keep out:** What do we not have that is negative?

#### KISS

**Keep:** What do we love that is essential to keep?

**Improve:** What might we improve over the next 10 years?

**Start:** What should we start doing?

**Stop:** What should we stop doing?

WHERE...

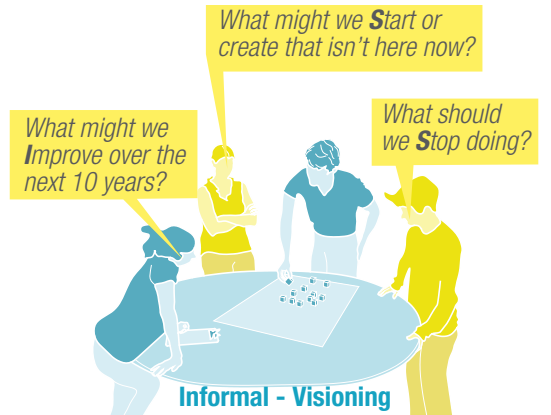
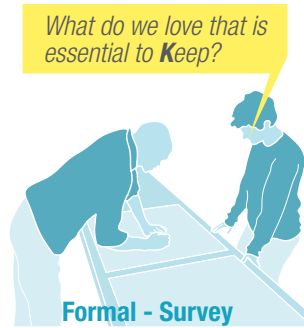
- ...can we go to for existing information (see 'TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE' above)?
- ...can we go for additional support or assistance (see 'TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE' above)?
- Example: "We have several major colleges in our neighborhood & board members who teach at these institutions - they can be our liaisons to the faculty & student population".

WHEN...

- ...is the right time to engage our community & how often?



**ENGAGING** our community, create a **VISION**



**2A UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITY**

**TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED**

SUGGESTED:

- District council staff
- Community members (this can vary depending on our strategy)

OPTIONAL:

- Community partners/stakeholders
- City staff (advisory role)

**TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE**

- Census data
- Previous plans
- Stakeholder map

**APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:**

**Respond To Local Context**

HOW...

...can we establish trust & understand our diverse groups?

- Consider investing in diverse groups by identifying individuals who have leadership roles in these groups & include them on task forces for events.

**Grow Community Assets/Resources**

HOW...

...can we use the resources within the community & how do we build upon them?

- Consider holding training sessions for our team on how to conduct effective interviews, conversations & engagement with the community.
- Think about what information might be valuable to the community to provide better feedback (if the community has a better idea of what's feasible, our data could be richer & more informative):  
Traffic statistics  
Maps  
Options to various issues with pros & cons
- Explore funding opportunities to support this process.

**Make Participation Accessible**

HOW...

...can we help our community voice their ideas for our plan?

- Consider factors such as participants' schedule
- After understanding the needs of our diverse groups, provide culturally sensitive accommodations at events or meetings such as food, activities & childcare.
- Consider using different activities & methods to accommodate for language & cultural barriers.

Example: "We will be having a Fall Festival & want our large Hmong population to be able to participate. We will include individuals from the Hmong community on our task force to plan activities & food appropriate to our audience."

# Tools For Understanding Our Community

## WHY use these tools?

- To understand the range of opinions related to an idea or issue.
- To discover characteristics about our community we did not know before or confirm what we already know.

## WHEN to use these tools?

- Before starting a project to ensure the outcome(s) meets the needs and interests of the community.
- After completing a project to measure how successful implementation strategies were.



This icon represents a tool using basic verbal communication.

VERBAL



This icon represents a tool using creative & artistic media and usually involves multiple methods.

CREATIVE



This icon represents a tool that uses written language, multi-media & social media.

MEDIA



This icon represents a tool that uses human observation & interaction as means of engagement.

EXPERIENTIAL



### Casual Conversation



Macalester-Groveland Community Council - Community Plan Process

Source:  
Andrew Tran



### Public Forum



Seattle Department of Neighborhoods - Public Outreach & Engagement Liaison Forum

Source:  
[www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/npi/documents/POLCoreValues.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/npi/documents/POLCoreValues.pdf)



### Sharing/Listening Session



Macalester-Groveland Community Council - Board Retreat

Source:  
Macalester-Groveland Community Council



### Walking Tour



The Capitol/Rice Station Walkability Survey

Source:  
<http://dcc-stpaul-mpls.org/special-projects/walk>



### Bike Tour



Sustainable Food Edmonton - Community Garden Bike Tour

Source:  
[www.facebook.com/sustainablefoodedmonton/?ref=stream](http://www.facebook.com/sustainablefoodedmonton/?ref=stream)



### Voting Gallery



Hamline-Midway Coalition - Friendly Streets Initiative

Source:  
[www.flickr.com/photos/54592130@N02/sets/72157626960838401/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/54592130@N02/sets/72157626960838401/)



### Wish Objects

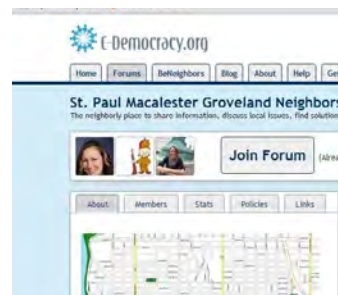


Macalester-Groveland Community Council - National Night Out

Source:  
Macalester-Groveland Community Council



### E-Democracy

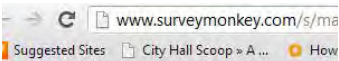


Macalester-Groveland Community Council - Online Forum

Source:  
<http://forums.e-democracy.org/groups/stpaul-macgrove>



### Survey Monkey



#### 1. What is your connection to the Macal

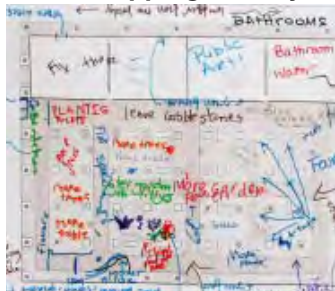
- Homeowner
- Renter
- Visitor
- Student
- Work in the Neighborhood

Macalester Groveland Community Council - Online Survey

Source:  
[www.surveymonkey.com/s/macgroveplan](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/macgroveplan)



### Mapping Activity



People Make Parks - Story Map

Source:  
[www.peoplemakeparks.org/tool/story-map-2/](http://www.peoplemakeparks.org/tool/story-map-2/)



### Photo Booth



Neighborland - 'I want \_\_\_\_\_ in my neighborhood' Photo Booth

Source:  
<http://handbook.neighborland.com/page/4/>



### Storefront Ad



Neighborland - Storefront Text Message Survey Advertisement

Source:  
<http://handbook.neighborland.com/page/4/>



Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council

## Case Study: Macalester-Groveland Community Council Board Retreat



### VERBAL

Tool: Sharing/Listening Session

*The Macalester-Groveland Community Council kicked off their Community Plan process in July 2013 with their annual Board Retreat. One purpose of the retreat was to communicate what community engagement is & how it contributes to building a stronger community. The meeting began with an icebreaker activity about conversations that resonated with participants & then transitioned to participants asking each other the following questions:*

1. "What do you love about the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood that is essential to keep?"
2. "What might we improve over the next 10 years?"
3. "What should we start or create in Mac-Groveland that isn't here now?"
4. "What should we stop doing?"

For more information refer to:  
Appendix J - Community Conversations Guide  
Appendix K - Conversations Report Form

#### APPROPRIATE FOR:

- Children
- Adults
- Small to medium groups (can be used as breakout sessions in large groups)

#### PROS:

- Requires minimal planning
- Can be used as an ice-breaker activity for larger meetings or engagement events

#### CONS:

- Challenging for diverse groups
- Requires staff or participants to record discussions

## Guiding Questions & Considerations

## Sharing/Listening Session

#### BEFORE the session:

- WHY are we holding a Sharing/Listening Session?
- WHO do we want to hear from?
- WHAT information do we want to collect?
- WHERE & WHEN do we want to conduct a Sharing/Listening Session, to maximize participation?
- DO WE NEED an interpreter to reach non-English speakers?

#### DURING the session:

- Have a table for materials & sign-in near the entry
- Provide tables & chairs for activities requiring a lot of writing/drawing
- Set up chairs in a circle if it is an informal event; semi-circle if you are projecting or using a white board.
- Hand out cards or sheets of paper with questions & ask participants to fill out as you wait for everyone to arrive.
- If you are asking people to share to the larger group, assign a team member to record notes.
- Explain how the information collected will be used & offer the opportunity to provide additional input & stay connected.

#### SUGGESTED MATERIALS:

- Recording sheet (consider pre-writing questions to make recording easier)
- Large paper pads to record responses (if not providing recording sheet)
- Pens/Markers
- Clip boards

#### OPTIONAL:

- Images, maps or other graphic aid to lead conversation
- Index cards (for users to fill out prior to conversing - use as a guide)
- PowerPoint presentation prompting points for discussion
- Laptop & projector
- Power strip & extension cord

Other examples:

[www.peoplemakeparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Listening-Session-HOW-TO.pdf](http://www.peoplemakeparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Listening-Session-HOW-TO.pdf)



Source: Hamline-Midway Coalition

## Case Study: Central Corridor Friendly Streets Initiative



**CREATIVE**

Tool: Voting Board

*In the summer of 2011, the Hamline-Midway Coalition & Frogtown Neighborhood Association held activities to capture the ideas & opinions of residents for the design of major streets affected by the Light Rail Transit line.*

*A small group of passionate community members formed a Working Group & came up with the idea of a gallery displaying common elements of street design.*

*They identified five block parties as great opportunities to engage the community. They also brought the gallery to residents rather than trying to mobilize residents to attend an event.*

*The block parties had over 700 participants, contributing to more than 1,700 opinions & completing over 200 surveys.*

For more information refer to:  
<http://www.bikewalk2012.com/sites/default/files/u7/CCFS%20Report%20on%20Phase%201.pdf>

### APPROPRIATE FOR:

- Children
- Adults
- Diverse Groups
- Large groups (i.e. community events)
- Informal settings

### PROS:

- Setting is flexible & mobile
- Easy to record data

### CONS:

- Can be expensive for large format printing
- Requires extensive planning: printing, constructing/deconstructing display
- Need multiple volunteers to explain/answer questions

## Guiding Questions & Considerations

## Voting Gallery

### BEFORE the event:

- WHY are we using a voting gallery (or other variation)?
- WHO do we want to hear from?
- WHAT information do we want to collect?
- WHAT materials will we need? What do we already have?
- WHERE & WHEN can we use a voting gallery to maximize participation? Is there an upcoming community event that this is appropriate for?
- DO WE NEED volunteers to explain & run the activity?

### DURING the event:

- Have a way to collect contact information to track participation & stay connected.
- Consider combining the voting gallery with other tools & methods such as casual conversation, interviews, photo booth & etc. This will allow us to capture additional qualitative input.
- Explain how the information collected will be used & offer the opportunity to provide additional input & stay connected.

### SUGGESTED MATERIALS:

- Images, maps or illustrations that represent the topics you want opinions on
- Stickers or post-it notes for voting
- Clotheslines for display
- Posts/trees for tying clotheslines
- Binder clips
- Pens/markers

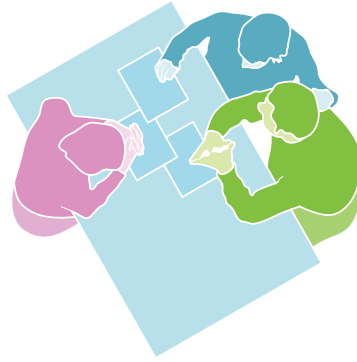
### OPTIONAL:

- Tack board or display panels
- PVC stands

Other examples:

[www.peoplemakeparks.org/tool/voting-boards/](http://www.peoplemakeparks.org/tool/voting-boards/)

**ENGAGING** our  
community, create a  
**VISION**



**2B** **MAKING SENSE OF OUR DATA**

**TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED**

SUGGESTED:

- District council staff
- Community members (this can vary depending on the amount of data collected)
- City Planner for our district (also consider city staff from the department that relates to specific topics such as staff from public works for issues/topics on utilities)

**TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE**

- Neighborhood Plan Document (topics of a neighborhood plan)
- 'PREPARING & SUBMITTING' (page 20)
- Neighborhood map
- Census data
- Stakeholder map

**SUGGESTIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING**

- Before going through steps 2A & 2C, revisit step 1B & confirm that we have created a plan & answered the following questions:
  1. What data are we collecting & what will it be used for?
  2. How are we collecting information?
  3. How can we share this information (we may not determine this until the data is collected, but we should keep it in mind)
  4. What is our method for sorting/translating the data so that we can compare the data collected from various methods?

Example: The Macalester-Groveland Community Council determined before having volunteers engage the community, that they would create a survey that:

1. Categorizes responses using KISS questions (see step 1B, page 9) to make sorting by issue/topic easier.
2. Asks for demographic data.
3. Presents options for staying connected so that participant(s) can be invited to follow-up events/activities if necessary or to support the process.

# Ways To Organize Our Data

**BY LOCATION:**

Organizing data by geographic location has several benefits and can provide various insights about our community.

**SUGGESTED MAPS:**

- Our neighborhood
- Specific lots/parcels
- Specific streets
- Paths/Trails

**POTENTIAL ACTION**

**POTENTIAL INSIGHT**

Locate where engagement attempts were made.

We have/have not heard from...

Locate issues participants have expressed.

Large concentrations of the same issue suggests potential priority goal or another engagement opportunity to get more specific feedback.

Overlay maps with trace paper/plastic sheets & locate data by topic. Use one sheet for each topic.

Visualizing different topics as they relate to a location can prevent redundancy and help form goals, objectives & specific actions (see page 21)

**BY ISSUE/TOPIC:**

Organizing data by issue/topic can help identify intersections across topics & points of conflict. It can also help identify key issues as well as lack of data & gaps to certain topics that we may want to follow up on.

**SUGGESTED ISSUES/ TOPICS BEYOND TOPICS IN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN DOCUMENT:**

- Community Cohesion
- Safety
- Urban Design
- Utilities
- Commercial Vitality
- Economic Development

**SUGGESTED TOOLS/ RESOURCES:**

- Excel spreadsheet
- Sticky notes
- Interns/volunteers to help input & sort data



**BY DEMOGRAPHIC:**

Organizing data by demographic can help us understand the overlapping interests or conflicts as they relate to different groups such as homeowner vs. renter. It can also help us identify which groups to engage further.

**SUGGESTED DEMOGRAPHICS:**

- Age
- Homeownership
- Household size/people with children vs. no children
- Household income
- Ethnicity

Example: "We have collected many responses from homeowners with concerns regarding the student population occupying rental properties. We have also collected a large amount of responses from the student population regarding a lack of student housing. This would be a good opportunity for us to invite these two groups to a forum to discuss possible housing options that would address the concerns of both sides."

**ENGAGING** our community, create a **VISION**



According to our surveys, the community wants a garden!



We've engaged 10% of the community. We need your help to better understand what you want for the community.



**2C ENGAGING IN DISCUSSION WITH OUR COMMUNITY**

**TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED**

SUGGESTED:

- District council staff
- Community members (this can vary depending on our strategy)

OPTIONAL:

- Community partners/stakeholders

**CLARIFICATIONS FROM STEPS 2A & 2B TO HELP US ENGAGE**

- Themes/topics
- Groups that have/have not been represented

**TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE**

- Census data
- Previous plans
- Stakeholder map

**APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:**

**Respond To Local Context**

WHO...

...can benefit from what we know?

- Consider labeling potential stakeholders to themes identified in step 2B. This will help us understand who can benefit from what we know or who can help us reach out to our community.

Example: "We collected many suggestions on road and sidewalk improvements in our neighborhood to make it more appealing to walk & bike. There is an organization at the local college that promotes alternative modes of transportation - this information could help them with their initiatives as well as help us reach the student population."

**Capitalize On Resources & Opportunities**

WHERE & WHEN...

...can we engage the groups that we have identified?

- Now that we have a better understanding of the community's interests & who to engage, we can take advantage of upcoming events or locations as opportunities for engagement.

Example: "The local bike shop in our neighborhood is teaching a class on bike maintenance & has expressed interest in having us share our information with participants. We can partner with the department of transportation & use the information collected so far to create maps indicating desirable/undesirable streets for biking. We can then create displays for class participants to see what others think of the bike infrastructure in our neighborhood to collect additional input."

**Make Participation Accessible**

HOW...

...can we communicate information (information we gathered from previous steps as well as information helpful for understanding specific issues such as zoning regulations, crime statistics & etc.)?

# Tools For Engaging In Discussion With Our Community

## WHY use these tools?

- To provide the community an opportunity to give additional input based on what has already been collected.
- To create a line of communication with the community & build trust.

## WHEN use these tools?

- Before starting a project to promote participation or to provide the community with information to make participation more accessible.
- After collecting data to show our community that their input is contributing to the process.

 **VERBAL** This icon represents a tool using basic verbal communication.

 **CREATIVE** This icon represents a tool using creative & artistic media and usually involves multiple methods.

 **MEDIA** This icon represents a tool that uses written language, multi-media & social media.

 **EXPERIENTIAL** This icon represents a tool that uses human observation & interaction as means of engagement.

 **Community Liaison**

 **Casual Conversation**

 **Doorknob Ad**

 **Interactive Billboard**



Seattle Department of Neighborhoods - Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POEL)



Macalester-Groveland Community Council - Community Plan Process



Summit University Planning Council - Pop-up Events



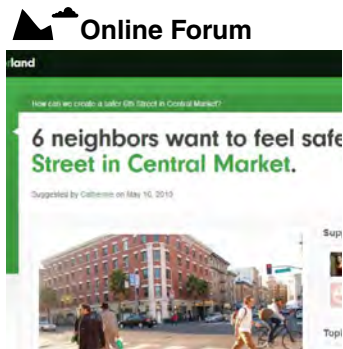
Neighborhood - 2013 IDEAS CITY StreetFest

Source: [www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/poel.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/poel.htm)

Source: Andrew Tran

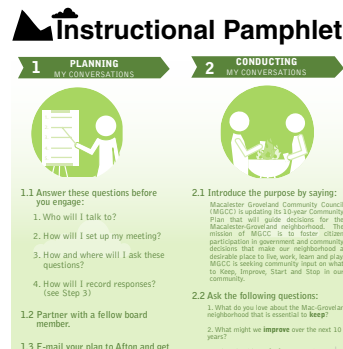
Source: [https://www.facebook.com/SummitU/photos\\_stream](https://www.facebook.com/SummitU/photos_stream)

Source: <http://handbook.neighborhood.com/>



Neighborhood Online Forum - How can we create a safer 6th Street in Central Market?

Source: <https://neighborland.com/6th>



Macalester-Groveland Community Council Conversations Guide

Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council



Macalester-Groveland Community Council Electronic Newsletter

Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council



Summit University Planning Council - Signs for pop-up events

Source: [https://www.facebook.com/SummitU/photos\\_stream](https://www.facebook.com/SummitU/photos_stream)





Source: [www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/poel.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/poel.htm)

## Case Study: Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Public Outreach & Engagement Liaisons (POEL)



**VERBAL**

Tool: Public Outreach & Engagement Liaison

*In 2009, the city of Seattle initiated the Planning/ Public Outreach Liaison (POL) Program to support the city's commitment to include historically underrepresented communities in neighborhood planning.*

*The POL outreach model is based on the principle of communicating with underrepresented communities through liaisons who are trusted & bilingual or bicultural.*

*This innovative outreach model resulted in thousands of Seattle stakeholders & residents engaging in the neighborhood planning process. Due to this success, the city broadened the program to support other city departments & changed the name to Public Outreach & Engagement Liaisons (POEL).*

For more information refer to:  
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/poel.htm>

### USEFUL FOR ENGAGING WITH DIVERSE GROUPS:

- Immigrant population
- Artist community
- Senior population
- Student population
- Small neighborhood groups (i.e. block clubs)

### PROS:

- Allows underrepresented groups to feel comfortable with participation.
- Accommodates for cultural needs/preferences

### CONS:

- May be difficult to identify individuals to be liaisons on a volunteer basis.
- May be difficult for liaison to represent the interests of both the district council & the diverse group.

## Guiding Questions & Considerations

## Public Outreach & Engagement Liaisons

### SKILLS THAT A LIAISON CAN PROVIDE:

- Translations
- Facilitation (in native language)
- Simultaneous interpretation
- Provide constituent support at events
- Feedback & expertise on cultural concerns & barriers
- Provide accurate reports of participant feedback & concerns
- Can conduct community workshops & events that parallel larger city-hosted meetings

### BEFORE the event

- WHY do we need a liaison?
- WHO do we want a liaison to connect us with?
- WHAT information do we want to collect/communicate from/to the diverse group(s)?

### SUGGESTED ATTRIBUTES WHEN IDENTIFYING & SELECTING LIAISONS:

- Trusted & passionate individuals who are part of their community's culture
- Fluent in their respective languages
- Are knowledgeable about their respective culture's practices & sensitivity to public participation
- Aware of critical issues specific to their respective culture

**1 PLANNING**  
MY CONVERSATIONS



Answer these questions before you engage:

1. Who will I talk to?
2. How will I set up my meeting?
3. How and where will I ask these questions?
4. How will I record responses? (see Step 3)

Partner with a fellow board member.

E-mail your plan to Afton and get OK to approach by July 24th:

1. Think about the 3-Step process (Plan, Conduct and Report) and create your plan.
2. E-mail your answers to the four questions in the format above to Afton at

**2 CONDUCTING**  
MY CONVERSATIONS



2.1 Introduce the purpose by saying:

Macalester-Groveland Community Council (MGCC) is updating its 10-year Community Plan that will guide decisions for the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. The mission of MGCC is to foster citizen participation in government and community decisions that make our neighborhood a desirable place to live, work, learn and play. MGCC is seeking community input on what to Keep, Improve, Start and Stop in our community.

2.2 Ask the following questions:

1. What do you love about the Mac-Groveland neighborhood that is essential to **keep**?
2. What might we **improve** over the next 10 years?
3. What should we **start** or create in Mac-Groveland that isn't here now?
4. What should we **stop** doing?
5. I would describe myself as...  
Example:

**3 REPORTING**  
MY CONVERSATIONS



3.1 Determine how you will record responses:

1. If you are having a one-on-one conversation in a small setting, consider just listen then record the answers on the p 'CONVERSATION REPORT' immediately.
2. If you are having a conversation in a setting such as a festival or block party, your partner along. As one person conduct the other records.

3.2 What to do after the conversation:

1. If you are recording responses with 'CONVERSATION REPORT':  
-Record the responses on Survey Monkey  
-Submit them in person to Afton May if you are unable to use Survey Monkey
2. If you are using an alternative approach:  
-Consult with Afton on how to submit responses.

Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council

## Case Study: Macalester-Groveland Community Council Board Retreat



Tool: Community Conversations Guide

*In addition to the Sharing/Listening Session (see page 12), the Macalester-Groveland Community Council also presented their Board leadership at the annual Board retreat with a community conversations guide. The purpose of the guide was to grow the capacity of the Board by providing members with tools to conduct effective conversation & elicit useful data. The guide provided suggestions on the following stages of conversation:*

1. "Planning My Conversations"
2. "Conducting My Conversations"
3. "Reporting My Conversations"

For more information refer to:  
Appendix J - Community Conversations Guide  
Appendix K - Conversations Report Form

**USEFUL FOR:**

- Children
- Adults
- Small, medium & large groups

**PROS:**

- Uses members within the community to conduct outreach & engagement
- Creates opportunity for community members to create new relationships

**CONS:**

- Requires demonstration & verbal explanation for optimum effectiveness
- Requires staff or participants to record discussions/feedback

### Guiding Questions & Considerations

### Community Conversations Guide

**BEFORE** distributing

- WHY do we need an instructional guide?
- WHO will be using this?
- WHAT will they be using this for?
- WHAT medium will this be?
- HOW will we explain/demonstrate its use?
- WHERE & WHEN will I distribute this guide?
- DO WE NEED volunteers to explain & run the activity?

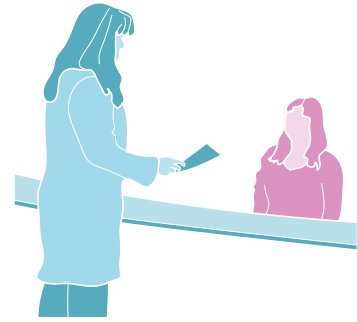
**DURING** the demonstration/training

- Clearly communicate the purpose, intent & all necessary steps for effective use.
- Allow time for participants to practice using the guide with each other.
- Consider having multiple rounds of practice.
- Consider time for feedback from participants. Ask questions such as:
  - 'Did you find any confusion or difficulty with the instructions?'
  - 'How did the sequence of instructions compare to how you conducted the conversation? Did anything seem unnatural?'
  - 'Are there additional instructions that would be helpful?'

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS:**

- Pens/Pencils
- Note pad for recording feedback

# PREPARING & SUBMITTING



2C

## PREPARING & SUBMITTING PLAN DRAFT

### TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED

#### SUGGESTED:

- District Council staff
- Community members (this can vary depending on how we structure our task force)
- City Planner for our district (advisory role)

#### OPTIONAL:

- Community partners/stakeholders (include these individuals as advisors to ensure the interests of these groups are represented in the plan)

### TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE

- District & Small Area Plan Guidelines\*
- Community Plan Template\*
- Existing plans (consult with our City Planner)

\*For additional information, visit the City of Saint Paul website at [www.stpaul.gov/](http://www.stpaul.gov/) & navigate to the 'Neighborhood Plans' page under the Planning & Economic Development department.

### SUGGESTED STEPS

1. Use step 2B 'MAKING SENSE OF OUR DATA' to organize input from the planning process & inform the draft plan.
2. Meet with City staff to better understand the content required on page 21 & how to successfully communicate & present data for each section.
3. Present draft plan to the community. This will contribute to the community's sense of ownership over the plan.
4. Submit an early draft plan for an informal review by City staff & Planning Commission committee. This will provide feedback before completion.
5. Submit final draft plan to our neighborhood organization Board for review & approval to submit to the City.
6. Submit final draft plan to the City for review & adoption (see page 22).

## FORMAT & CONTENT OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN DOCUMENT

- Cover Page
- Contents & Acknowledgements
- Introduction
- Topic Chapters
  - Land Use \_\_\_\_\_
  - Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - Parks & Recreation \_\_\_\_\_
  - Housing \_\_\_\_\_
  - Water Resources \_\_\_\_\_
  - Historic Preservation \_\_\_\_\_
- **Other Potential Topics:**
  - Utilities
  - Urban Design
  - Safety
- Implementation
- Graphics or Data
  - Maps
  - Data
  - Diagrams/Photos



## APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:

### Respond To Local Context

HOW...

...do we know if our interpretation & language represents what the community wants?

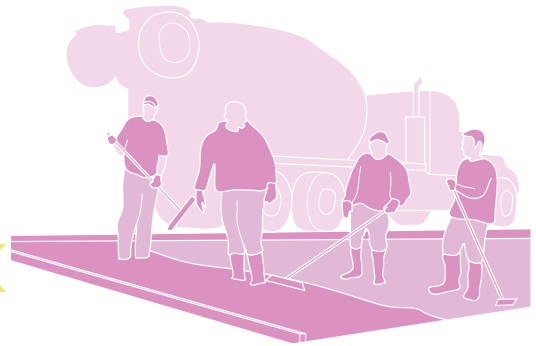
- Consider using supplemental information such as maps, plans & photos. This can help simplify how we communicate our vision.
- Use the draft as an engagement opportunity. Consider recruiting volunteers at previous engagement events to participate in focus groups to provide additional feedback.

### Capitalize On Resources & Opportunities

WHO...

...should we include on our task force or committee to create the plan draft?

- Consider using representatives from each of our committees to be in charge of corresponding topic sections. This can help to ensure that objectives & strategies meet the community's overall vision for the specific topic.



**4A IMPLEMENTATION - USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

**4B IMPLEMENTATION - CITY APPROVES FUNDING**

**TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED**

**4A - IMPLEMENTATION USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

**SUGGESTED:**

- Community members (size depends on scope of the implementation strategy)
- District Council staff/leadership

**NOTE:** It is very crucial to maintain the community's interest for long-term goals with short-term projects. This reminds the community that their support is needed to take action.

**OPTIONAL:**

- Community partners/stakeholders (include if implementation strategy involves community partners for funding, expertise or support)
- City staff (if the city is involved, make sure to indicate that it is a community-led project)

**4B - PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**

**SUGGESTED:**

- Community members (a larger community attendance provides stronger support for plan approval)
- District Council staff/leadership

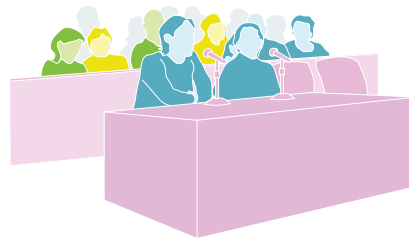
**OPTIONAL:**

- Community partners/stakeholders

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL - REVIEW & APPROVAL PROCESS**



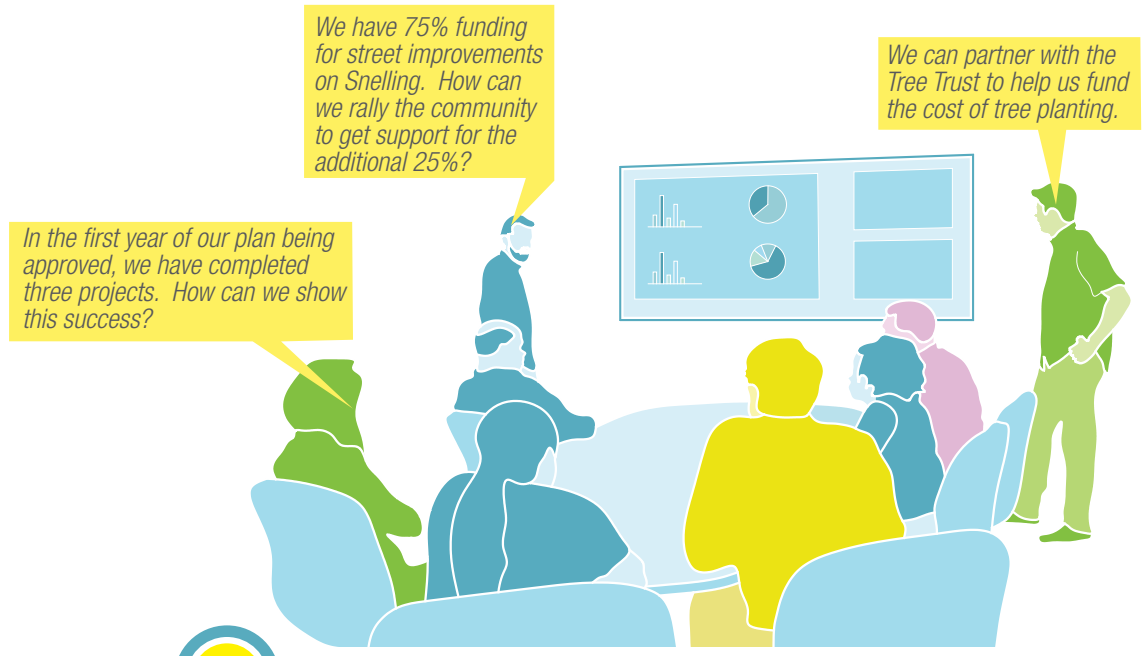
- 1 PLAN REVIEW BY PLANNING COMMISSION**
- 2 Neighborhood Committee review & possible revisions.
- 3 Committee recommends plan for public hearing.
- 4 Planning Commission schedules public hearing.



- 1 PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**
- 2 Committee hearing comments & possible revisions.
- 3 Committee recommends plan adoption.
- 4 Planning Commission recommends plan to Mayor & City



- 1 PLAN REVIEW BY CITY COUNCIL**
- 2 City Council adopts plan.
- 3 Plan review and approval by Met Council.
- 4 Plan is formally adopted.



**4C TRACKING, MEASURING & UPDATING**

*Once our plan is completed, approved & we have begun implementing the strategies, we should be tracking, measuring & updating to respond to changing conditions & capture unknown opportunities as they come along. If our plan is effective, it will provide guidelines to ensure that whatever happens is desirable to our community.*

- TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED** SUGGESTED:
- District Council staff
  - Community members (Board executive committee or other task force in charge of the community plan process)
  - Community partners/stakeholders (consider those who benefit/influence specific issues being discussed)
- TOOLS & RESOURCES TO REFERENCE:**
- Time line for implementation strategies being tracked
  - Our Community Plan Document
  - Financial/funding statistics

**APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLANNING - BEFORE PROCEEDING, ASK:**

**Respond To Local Context**

- WHEN...
- ...should we TRACK our plan?
    - Tracking early on & during the implementation phase allows for adjustments to be made that can avoid undesirable outcomes.
  - ...should we MEASURE our plan?
    - Measuring our plan's effectiveness may be most appropriate after the completion of implementation strategies to assess the outcome(s) with the intended goal(s).
  - ...should we UPDATE our plan?
    - plans should be updated every 10 years if a need still exists or as key conditions & priorities change.

## **APPENDIX**

APPENDIX A: Process

APPENDIX B: Literature Review - Purpose of Community Planning

APPENDIX C: Literature Review - Principles of Community Planning

APPENDIX D: Literature Review - Methods of Participation

APPENDIX E: Focus Groups - Saint Paul District Councils

APPENDIX F: Interview (Asian Economic Development Association)

APPENDIX G: Interview - Hamline-Midway Coalition (District 11)

APPENDIX H: Observations - Macalester-Groveland Community Council Meetings

APPENDIX J: Macalester-Groveland Community Council Conversations Guide

APPENDIX K: Community Conversations Report Form

# APPENDIX A: Process

The research was conducted using a variety of methods specific to four stages of the project: 1. Understand Context; 2. Observe the Community; 3. Identify Areas & Tools For Growth; & 4. Develop & Refine Tools to Support Growth. The four stages were designed to develop an understanding of community planning at a general level, progressing to a more thorough understanding specific to the district council structure of Saint Paul & responding to these two stages with the creation & refinement of a community plan road map & companion guide.

PROJECT PHASES	GOALS	METHOD
 <p><b>1</b> <b>UNDERSTAND CONTEXT</b></p>	<p>Develop a general understanding of community planning.</p>	<p><b>Literature Review:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Best practices of neighborhood planning</li> <li>● Methods of participation</li> </ul>
 <p><b>2</b> <b>OBSERVE THE COMMUNITY</b></p>	<p>Develop a specific understanding of community planning within the context of Saint Paul.</p>	<p><b>Focus Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● (2) Focus Groups with 8 District councils</li> </ul> <p><b>Interviews:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lars Christiansen</li> <li>● Joo-hee Pomplun</li> </ul>
 <p><b>3</b> <b>IDENTIFY AREAS &amp; TOOLS FOR GROWTH</b></p>	<p>Identify specific obstacles &amp; gaps in understanding the community plan process.</p> <p>Determine specific strategies &amp; tools to address these obstacles.</p> <p>Identify audience &amp; method of communicating concepts.</p>	<p><b>Observations - MGCC Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board Meeting</li> <li>● Board Retreat</li> <li>● Long Range Planning Committee Meetings</li> </ul>
 <p><b>4</b> <b>DEVELOP &amp; REFINE TOOLS TO SUPPORT GROWTH</b></p>	<p>Develop strategy for user interaction.</p> <p>Create an accessible format to communicate strategies &amp; tools.</p>	<p><b>Research Synthesis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Analyze best practices &amp; how they can address obstacles</li> <li>● Categorize tools &amp; strategies from research to identify commonalities with obstacles</li> </ul> <p><b>Prototype:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feedback sessions with MGCC, City of Saint Paul</li> <li>● Refine ideas &amp; presentation</li> </ul>



## APPENDIX B: Literature Review - Purpose of Community Planning

The purpose of community planning has been commonly misunderstood as a necessary process that communities are required to go through in order to receive funding by the city in which they are located. As a result, the plan itself is often the result of the ideas & opinions of a few community leaders or activists. Through several discussions & interviews as documented in Appendices E through H, this perception is largely contributed by the requirement of a plan document.

Noticing this trend, the Macalester-Groveland Community Council developed three general goals for why they are undergoing through the process & what they want to achieve beyond the plan document. The table below summarizes the varying purposes of the community plan process & its benefits. It is critical for any community initiating or undergoing the process to clearly define this for themselves as it serves as a basic framework for community engagement & influences the strategies for addressing key issues such as:

- How are we currently operating & who are we really representing as a result?
- Who do we want to benefit vs. Who is currently benefitting?
- What are the first steps to changing our current approach?

### Purpose & Benefits of Community Planning

American Planning Association (Jones)	City of St. Paul	Macalester-Groveland Community Council
Provide a guide for future development representing shared visions.	Provide a 10-yr vision, policy priorities & strategies to guide growth, investment, & development in the district.	Opportunity for the community to improve its profile.
Identify tasks necessary to carry out plan.	Provide a process for community engagement to discuss & set priorities for the future of an area, consistent with & assisting to implement the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan at the neighborhood level.	Opportunity for the community to engage with itself - to discover new relationships & to strengthen existing ones
Increase citizen involvement, development of resident leadership, & knowledge about commitment to neighborhood.	Provide a process for community engagement to discuss & set priorities for the future of an area, consistent with & assisting to implement the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan at the neighborhood level.	Create a vision & support for implementing a 10-yr. plan.
Opportunity for residents to learn more about each other & their neighborhood, & develop a common vision.	Incorporate into the district plan key strategies or policies from existing, older small area plan(s) within the district, if the small area plan(s) is no longer needed as a stand alone document, & then decertify the old small area plan(s).	Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council (2013).
Strengthen communities through increased interaction.	Incorporate into the district plan key strategies or policies from existing, older small area plan(s) within the district, if the small area plan(s) is no longer needed as a stand alone document, & then decertify the old small area plan(s).	Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council (2013).
Bridging the gap between government officials & local leaders to create fairer distribution of resources.	Source: <sup>3</sup> City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development. <i>District and Small Area Plan Guidelines</i> (2010).	Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council (2013).
Source: <sup>7</sup> Jones, Bernie. <i>Neighborhood Planning</i> (1990).	Source: <sup>3</sup> City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development. <i>District and Small Area Plan Guidelines</i> (2010).	Source: Macalester-Groveland Community Council (2013).

## APPENDIX C: Literature Review - Principles of Community Planning

The purpose of this literature review was to understand the critical concepts that contributes to a successful community plan. The tables in this appendix summarizes the key principles defined by several national planning organizations & cities. Bernie Jones' principles focuses more on participation from the perspective of the resident/citizen. The principles developed as part of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) conference are more wholistic to the creation of a neighborhood plan document, while San Jose's Strong Neighborhoods' principles are more regionally specific but combines the democratic tone of Jones with a more strategic tone of ULI.

The principles from these three different perspectives as well as a few others that are not shown, provided the framework for the questions asked of district council staff during focus group meetings (pg. 30) & individual interviews (pg. 31, 32). These meetings & interviews produced a collection of best practices & common challenges that community organizations go through, which informed the five principles of community planning for this project:

- Respond to Local Context
- Capitalize on Resources & Opportunities
- Create a Game Plan
- Grow Community Assets/Resources
- Make Participation Accessible

'Neighborhood Planning Principles' - Urban Land Institute

### Build Community

- Identify & understand the neighborhood's demographic & cultural influences;
- Involve residents, businesses, civic groups, & institutions early on;
- Establish trust & treat people with respect;
- Know who is affected by but not represented in the collaborative process & provide them with a voice;
- Do not be distracted by people who oppose any change;
- Obtain frequent feedback.

### Foster Leadership

- Appoint a local entity to champion the planning effort;
- Decide on responsibility for each neighborhood goal.

### Plan for Implementation

- Build in certainty, clarity, & predictability;
- Set short & long-term goals & establish milestones;
- Do not set the community's sights too low;
- Energize the long-term vision with short-term successes;
- Establish priorities;
- Learn from what other communities have done;
- Keep the plan flexible enough to capture opportunity;
- Create a sustainable planning & implementation process.

### Take Advantage of Available Tools and Resources

- Offer hospitality;
- Use visual aids;
- Map the neighborhood's assets;
- Put together a toolbox of best practices.

### Be Financially Realistic

- Know what things cost & how much money is available;
- Be creative at filling in gaps in financing;
- Involve developers in the process.

### Communicate the Planning Process Effectively

- Market neighborhood planning;
- Deliver tangible results early on;
- Be honest about what the planning process can & cannot achieve.

### Make the Neighborhood's "Social" Capital Grow

- Know the city's political culture & structure
- Engage community decision makers in the planning process
- Engage corporate & civic leaders in the planning process
- Engage public officials in the planning process

Source:

<sup>8</sup>Myerson, Deborah. *Involving the Community in Neighborhood Planning* (2004).

## 'Principles of Neighborhood Participation' - Bernie Jones

### Deprofessionalization

The future of the neighborhood is not determined only by professionals.

### Decentralization

The decision making is not done by one entity or institution.

### Demystification

The planning process should be user-friendly and not intimidating.

### Democratization

More people are involved directly in the decision making process, especially stakeholders.

Source:

<sup>7</sup> Jones, Bernie. *Neighborhood Planning* (1990).

## 'Strong Neighborhoods' - City of San Jose, California

### Remove Barriers to Neighborhood Action

- a. Measure progress by creating an on-line "Get Out of the Way" report card.
- b. Work with community leaders & staff to identify a "top-five" list of common-sense, achievable changes to city policy or practice.
- c. Partner with Senior Staff to bring forward the needed changes for City Council consideration.

### Stabilize Neighborhoods in Crisis

- a. Identify & prioritize neighborhoods in need of support based on real information including crime, unemployment, foreclosures, etc.
- b. Create task forces that include residents, community organizers, police, code enforcement, housing rehabilitation, anti-graffiti, & youth services working as a single team. Collaborate with schools, the faith community, community-based organizations & service providers.
- c. Commit to measurable action plans & reporting in collaboration with the community.

### Neighborhood Action

- a. Provide neighbors with the tools & training to take action on their own, (e.g. access to supplies for clean up days).
- b. Create ways of sharing best practices across neighborhoods.
- c. Make leadership training & coaching with neighborhood leaders a priority & support organizations in becoming capable of handling their day to day operations.
- d. Measure & report neighborhood action & social capital resulting from these efforts.

### Resources to Priorities

- a. Coordinate Redevelopment Agency funds, Community Development Block Grant & Neighborhood Stabilization Program & similar funds as a unified effort.
- b. Use the investment of public funds to leverage additional resources whenever possible
- c. Expand & replicate successful partnerships (such as the successful CommUniverCity collaboration with San Jose State)
- d. Focus funding resources on stabilizing neighborhoods in crisis.

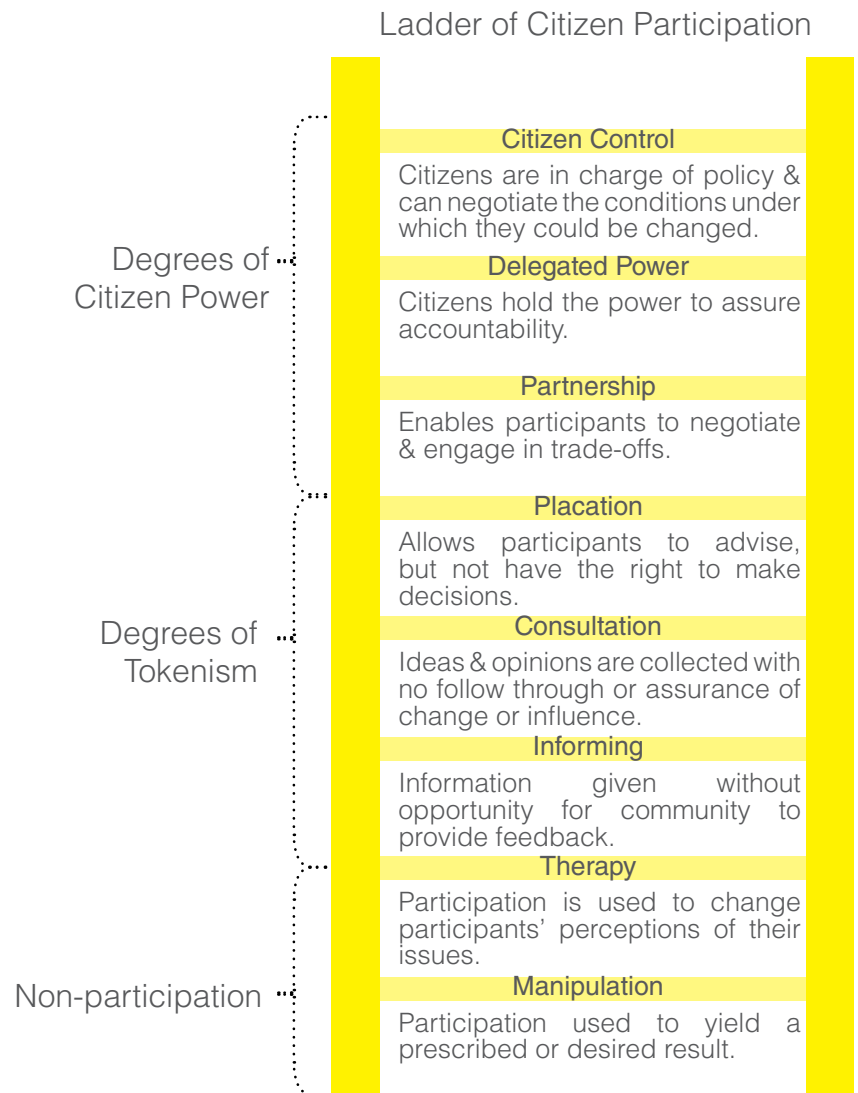
Source:

<sup>9</sup> City of San Jose, California. *Strong Neighborhoods* (2010).

## APPENDIX D: Literature Review - Methods of Public Participation

This component of Phase 1 (see Appendix A) was focused on researching the community engagement element of the community planning process. Several classifications of participatory methods were studied including Sherry Arnstein's 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' & Halifax Regional Municipality's (HRM) 'Continuum of Community Engagement'.

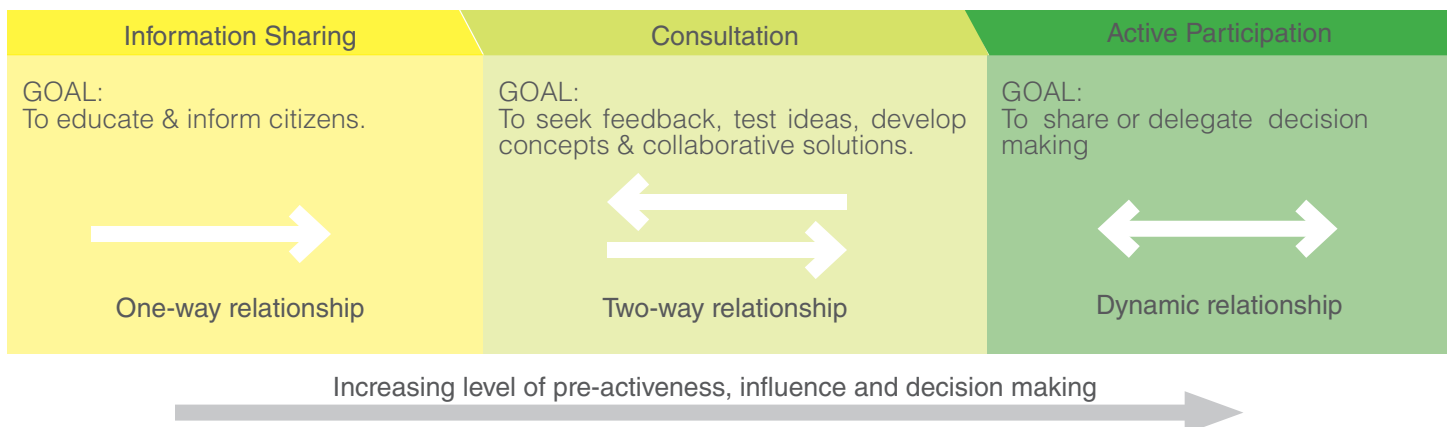
While Arnstein classifies 'Consultation' & 'Informing' in a negative light, HRM re-interprets Arnstein's model & positions these two methods as necessary stages that builds momentum towards active participation in which decision making is shared with the community to build community capacity & responsibility.



Source:

<sup>1</sup> Arnstein, Sherry. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation" (1969).

### Continuum of Community Engagement



Source:

<sup>6</sup> Halifax Regional Municipality. *Community Engagement Strategy* (2008).

## APPENDIX E: Focus Groups - Saint Paul District Councils

### Focus Group 1:

- District 1 Community Council
- Macalester-Groveland Community Council
- St. Anthony Park Community Council
- West Side Community Organization
- West 7th/For Road Federation

### Focus Group 2:

- District 6 Planning Council
- District 10 Como Community Council
- Macalester-Groveland Community Council
- Summit University Planning Council
- Union Park District Council

### Purpose:

- To identify successes & challenges
- To understand these successes & challenges as they relate to the context of each district council.
- To identify the “gaps” that informs the development of the Road Map & Companion Guide.



Left - Participants from Focus Group 2 discussing the structure of their district council  
 Center - Participants from Focus Group 1 illustrating the structure of their district council  
 Right - Mason Wells from Focus Group 1 sharing the structure of West Side Community Organization  
 Source: Andrew Tran

Common Challenges	Successes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing short term projects take longer than expected.</li> <li>• Community is more interested in projects as they come up vs. projects in the Neighborhood Plan.</li> <li>• Participation mostly occurs when there is controversial issue.</li> <li>• Meetings are too time consuming &amp; contribute to engagement fatigue</li> <li>• Difficulty in obtaining &amp; maintaining new participants.</li> <li>• Difficulty with homeowners' perception of transient groups (i.e. renters &amp; students). Difficulty in communicating that the community is not inclusive of only those who are property owners.</li> <li>• Difficulty in identifying avenues for including underrepresented groups.</li> <li>• Lack of support for establishing localized leadership, such as block club leaders.</li> <li>• Determining how to establish a sense of ownership over the community plan.</li> <li>• Determining how to represent those who do not have physical presence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several District Councils noted success in task forces &amp; committees created temporarily for specific initiatives.</li> <li>• One District Council found success in deliberately forming a committee with constituents that had conflicting views. While there were conflicts at first, the committee was able to benefit from the different perspectives.</li> <li>• Holding a meeting for constituents with previous conflict clears away legacy problems if the meeting is effectively facilitated.</li> <li>• Short-term projects sets tangible &amp; visible milestones for a long-term goal.</li> <li>• One District Council found success in advocating for the needs of the community's underrepresented group by recruiting a resident organizer (this is similar to a planning outreach &amp; engagement liaison).</li> </ul>

Source:

## APPENDIX G: Interview - Asian Economic Development Association

The chart below summarizes the conversation with Joo-Hee Pomplun from the Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA) regarding their engagement process with business owners affected by the construction of the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project using the following questions:

1. How did you engage with businesses, residents & organizations?
2. How did you address language differences, business interests, cultural & social differences?
3. How did you determine the best mechanism to inform & collect information? Which were effective/not effective?
4. Describe the process you used to engage with these groups. What was successful/unsuccessful about the process?
5. How was information made available? How was local expertise & knowledge collected, processed & utilized?
6. How did you communicate why people were participating in prescribed processes?



**Project:** Little Mekong Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Impact Study  
**Interview With:** Joo-Hee Pomplun  
**Date:** 06.26.13

Above - Construction of the CCLRT project on University Avenue  
 Source: Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA)

Approaches of Little Mekong CCLRT	Techniques/Tools to Learn From
Used varying methods to capture business owners' opinions.	Respond to local context by using or designing methods specific to the needs of the target audience.
Used semi-structured interviews to respond to the cultural preference of business owners.	Determine before engaging the community if quantitative or qualitative data is most appropriate to providing insight.
Conducted In-person interviews using CURA research assistants speaking the language of business owners. This accounted for the language barrier & established trust.	Collaborating with community representatives can help identify cultural sensitivities & accommodate for cultural barriers.
Created a data collection tool for interviewer to quickly capture the experiences of businesses with the light rail construction.	Build capacity within the community & organization by providing tools for volunteers or Board leadership.

Source:  
 Information for table is a summary from a personal interview with Joo-Hee Pomplun (2013)

## APPENDIX F: Interview - Hamline-Midway Coalition (District 11)

The chart below illustrates the approaches & techniques/tools learned from the Central Corridor Friendly Streets Initiative (CCFSI) as described from an interview with Lars Christiansen, a member of the Hamline-Midway Coalition (District 11). The initiative was a joint collaboration between Hamline-Midway Coalition (District 11) & Frogtown Neighborhood Association (District 7) to address the design & use of various streets in these neighborhoods. The following questions were used to frame the interview:

1. "How did you identify & assign roles for the effort & what was the responsibility of each role?"
2. "How did you explain the purpose of the block party gallery activity to participants & how their ideas would be used?"
3. "What was the exchange of information collected between the working group, participants, residents who did not participate but could be affected by the development, the city & any other collaborators?"



**Project:** Central Corridor Friendly Streets Initiative (CCFSI)

**Interview With:** Lars Christiansen

**Date:** 07.10.13

Above - Illustrations from residents representing what they hope the neighborhood will look like in the future.  
Source: Hamline-Midway Coalition

Approaches of CCFSI	Techniques/Tools to Learn From
Identified City plans for bikeway & got ahead of city.	Capitalize on the timing of opportunities to establish a sense of ownership over the community plan/projects.
Residents were presented issues, solutions visually & were given the opportunity to provide their opinions.	Use engagement methods that are open & broad (i.e. visioning activities) vs. Yes/No decisions.
Identified active community members. Trusted community members were able to mobilize the effort.	Foster leadership & establish accountability by delegating responsibility.
Used informal space & created an informal environment.	Remove the formality of traditional planning to make participation more accessible.
Used an existing funding opportunity through the Central Corridors Funder's Collaborative Grant	Know what things cost, how much funding is available & possible funding opportunities.
Block parties relieved parents from need of day care, displaces dinner & was a part of everyday life.	Capitalize on the method of engagement to accommodate for the needs of participants.
Removed the expert - non-expert dynamic. The effort was effective because it was led by residents.	Be cognizant of when to include professionals/experts in the process to make participation less intimidating.
Recognized that surveys are less appealing as a way to interact with someone.	Utilize multiple methods to collect richer data (i.e. surveys with visioning activities)

Source:

Information for table is a summary from a personal interview with Lars Christiansen (2013).

## APPENDIX H: Observations - Macalester-Groveland Community Council (MGCC) Meetings

The chart below summarizes the major observations made during several MGCC meetings. From these observations, obstacles & gaps in understanding the community plan process were identified. These observations provided insight as to what strategies or tools would be most useful for the district council as they proceed with the plan process.



### MGCC Meetings:

- Board meeting (06.13.13)
- Board retreat (07.11.13)
- Long-Range Planning Committee meeting (07.01.12, 08.05.13)

Above - Board members of MGCC practice interviewing each other during the annual board retreat.  
Source: MGCC

Observations	Techniques/Tools to Learn From
There was difficulty in understanding short-term goals & how they contributed to long-term goals	Create a dynamic time line & have it present at all meetings for reference.
Participants identified minor difficulties with instructional guides.	Utilize questions to direct indirectly. Allow flexibility for the user.
District council members had difficulty understanding the community plan process, roles & responsibilities.	Presenting the process in segments with best practices for each can alleviate community members from feeling overwhelmed with understanding the entire process all at once.
District council staff had difficulty communicating the benefits of the community plan process to Board members & Board leadership.	Using interactive meetings with visual guides to demonstrate the process can be more effective than verbal or written communication (see page 12 & 19).
District council staff & members had difficulty in determining what data to collect first & what questions to ask that would elicit useful data.	Preliminary questions using the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats) method can assist in eliciting responses into general themes & provide insight to more specific themes. See step 1B (page 9) & Appendix K (page 35).
District council members struggled with identifying creative ways for increasing community participation beyond inviting interested community members to join committees.	This observation identified the need for a collection of alternative methods & explanations as to how these methods could be used not only for community building but for collecting useful data.

Source:  
Information for table is a summary of personal observations from MGCC meetings (2013).



# APPENDIX J: Macalester-Groveland Community Council Conversations Guide

## ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

### APPROACH #1

Lauren and Diana are team members who decide that they will start small and engage with several active members of the local church. They feel like targeting active members of the church is strategic because they are heavily involved in the community.

They visit the pastor and tell him about the community engagement effort using the statement from 'CONDUCTING MY CONVERSATIONS' (see other side). They ask if he would like to support this effort by reaching out to active members of his church.

The pastor supports the mission to which Lauren suggests an informal potluck at the church. Lauren, Diana and two other board members attend the potluck the following week with the pastor and six church members. As people arrive they are handed four cards, each with one of the KISS questions (see other side) and are instructed to fill them out.

While they are enjoying their food, Diana asks each person to take turns talking about what they wrote. The activity ends with people sharing personal experiences and thoughts of Macalester-Groveland.

After the potluck, Lauren and Diana record the responses from the index cards on Survey Monkey.

#### MATERIALS:

- Treats
- Tables & chairs
- Index cards
- Writing utensils

### APPROACH #2

Afton and Andrew are team members and decide to target the Block Club on Stanford between Cleveland and Kenneth at the upcoming National Night Out event.

They choose to call the neighbor rep of this Block Club and explain to them the mission of the community plan by using the statement from 'CONDUCTING MY CONVERSATIONS' (see other side). They share their activity plans with him and he invites them to attend.

Because of the amount of people attending, Afton and Andrew decide that it would be a good opportunity to create a fun activity for the event. They plan to ask the questions by having residents write their responses to the KISS questions (see other side) on different colored index cards and tape them to the table for other residents to see.

After the event, they take their collection of index cards and record the responses on Survey Monkey.

#### MATERIALS:

- Table/booth for writing
- Writing utensils
- Card stock/index cards
- Sign-in sheet



## GUIDE TO COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

SO THAT WE CAN...

- 1 Engage our community
- 2 Raise the profile of MGCC
- 3 Create a vision & support to implement 10 yr. plan

Our mission is to foster citizen participation in government and community decisions that make our neighborhood a desirable place to live, work, learn and play.

## 1 PLANNING MY CONVERSATIONS



### 1.1 Answer these questions before you engage:

1. Who will I talk to?
2. How will I set up my meeting?
3. How and where will I ask these questions?
4. How will I record responses? (see Step 3)

### 1.2 Partner with a fellow board member.

### 1.3 E-mail your plan to Afton and get OK to approach by July 24th:

1. Think about the 3-Step process (Plan, Conduct and Report) and create your plan.
2. E-mail your answers to the four questions in the format above to Afton at [afton@macgrove.org](mailto:afton@macgrove.org).

## 2 CONDUCTING MY CONVERSATIONS



### 2.1 Introduce the purpose by saying:

Macalester Groveland Community Council (MGCC) is updating its 10-year Community Plan that will guide decisions for the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. The mission of MGCC is to foster citizen participation in government and community decisions that make our neighborhood a desirable place to live, work, learn and play. MGCC is seeking community input on what to Keep, Improve, Start and Stop in our community.

### 2.2 Ask the following questions:

1. I would describe myself as...  
Example:  
-53 year old white male  
-23 year resident  
-Father of 2 - one teenager and one in college  
-Work in academia in the neighborhood (What is their connection to Mac-Grove?)
2. What do you love about the Mac-Groveland neighborhood that is essential to **keep**?
3. What might we **improve** over the next 10 years?
4. What should we **start** or create in Mac-Groveland that isn't here now?
5. What should we **stop** doing?

### 2.3 Present opportunity to stay engaged:

1. 'If you are interested in learning more about the process, getting involved or signing up for our e-newsletter, provide us your contact information (name and e-mail)'.

## 3 REPORTING MY CONVERSATIONS



### 3.1 Determine how you will record responses:

1. If you are having a one-on-one conversation in a small setting, consider just listening and then record the answers on the provided 'CONVERSATION REPORT' immediately after.
2. If you are having a conversation in a larger setting such as a festival or block party, bring your partner along. As one person converses, the other records.
3. In group settings, consider using cards to collect individual demographic and contact information.

### 3.2 What to do after the conversations:

1. If you are recording responses with the 'CONVERSATION REPORT':  
-Record the responses online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/macgroveplan>  
-Submit them in person to Afton Martens if you are unable to use Survey Monkey.
2. If you are using an alternative approach:  
-Consult with Afton on how to submit responses.

# APPENDIX K: Community Conversation Report Form



## COMMUNITY PLAN SURVEY

Macalester Groveland Community Council (MGCC) is updating its 10-year Community Plan that will guide decisions for the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. The mission of MGCC is to foster citizen participation in government and community decisions that make our neighborhood a desirable place to live, work, learn and play. MGCC is seeking community input on what to Keep, Improve, Start and Stop in our community.

You can also fill this survey out online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/macgroveplan>

**1. What do you love about the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood that is essential to keep?**

**2. What might we improve over the next 10 years?**

**3. What should we start or create in Mac-Groveland that isn't here now?**

**4. What should we stop doing?**

**5. What is your connection to the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood (please check all that apply)?**

- Homeowner
- Renter
- Visitor
- Student
- Work in the Neighborhood
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**6. How would you describe yourself?**

**Gender**

- Male
- Female

**Ethnicity**

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to comment

**Age**

- Under 12 years
- 12-17 years
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65-74 years
- 75 years or older
- Prefer not to comment

**How else would you describe yourself (i.e., a neighborhood group you are involved with - such as a parent's group or block club, your profession, etc.)?**

**7. How long have you lived, worked, studied or played in Macalester-Groveland?**

**8. If you would like to stay connected with the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, select how below:**

- Receive the electronic newsletter, the E-Illuminator
- Volunteer at community events

To receive our e-newsletter and/or to be contacted to volunteer at events, please give us your email address:

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

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# COMPANION GUIDE

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