

A high-angle, top-down photograph of a diverse group of people sitting on a light-colored floor. Their arms are extended towards the center, and their hands are stacked on top of each other in a circular formation. The people are wearing various colorful clothing, including a blue and white checkered shirt, a yellow long-sleeved shirt, a blue long-sleeved shirt, a red and white plaid shirt, and a green long-sleeved shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored floor.

# Community Relations & Public Participation



A diverse group of people, including men and women of various ages and ethnicities, are walking together in a park. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise, with trees in the background. The group is walking in a line, and some are looking towards the camera while others are looking at each other, suggesting a sense of community and shared purpose.

# Community

- A group of people living in the same place or having particular characteristics in common.
- A feeling of fellowship with others as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and goal.



# COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Community Relations as a practice can be defined as the methods used to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship within the community.



A background image showing two people in business attire shaking hands. The person on the left is a man in a dark suit, and the person on the right is a woman in a dark blazer. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a bright, slightly blurred outdoor setting.

**Why is Community Relations  
important to businesses?**



Founded a foundation 1977 8 years after opening first store that is dedicated to creating opportunities for everyone

Employees from around the world volunteered over 450,000 hours to improve their local communities.

Invests in 2 signature programs – This Way Ahead paid internship where young people who are selected from local non profits and get real on the job experience as part of a paid summer internship

Women focused program developed to improve women's opportunities at home and at work through tracked assessments like improved communication skills, self confidence, and productivity

Has touched millions of lives through partnerships with nonprofits all over the globe.





GAP



In 1996, invested \$10 million to:

Setup LOAN Funds to entrepreneurs

Provided technical training for local students

Established centers for pregnant and nursing mothers









## **They have strong brand awareness**

Their programs are designed to build positive relationships within the community

They demonstrate involvement to community concerns and issues.

They design and implement programs that improve the community's quality of life

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A background image showing a community cleanup project. In the foreground, a person wearing a black shirt, black pants, and a blue and white cap is using a shovel to dig in the dirt. To their right, another person is pushing a yellow wheelbarrow. In the background, a third person is visible near a light blue house with white trim. The ground is reddish-brown dirt, and there are some green plants and a wooden fence in the distance.

## RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE GROUNDWORK

- Well planned projects begin with relationship mapping and building
- The bigger the project the more relationships you will usually need as a foundation
- During your planning stage, build in time to develop the relationship





**Fundamental reasons to  
Build relationships**

A photograph showing the backs of two people's arms and hands. They are both wearing jackets and have their fists raised in a gesture of solidarity or protest. The person on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a green jacket. The person on the right is wearing a dark blue jacket. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting with other people and structures.

Community Building occurs one to one





We need relationships to win allies to support our causes





Our relationships give meaning and purpose to work and our lives



# COMMUNITY RELATIONS: HOW DO YOU BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Where to begin, who to involve

- Build relationships one at a time:  
No shortcuts to authentic relationships.
- Be friendly and make a connection.  
Don't underestimate the power of a smile.
- Ask people questions  
This is your opportunity to learn, so listen attentively.
- Tell people about yourself
  - Trust is gained when you are transparent





- Go places and do things  
You have to go to where people are to build relationships
- Accept people the way they are.  
Agreement is not a requirement in building relationships.
- Overcome the fear of rejection  
Embrace the fact that it will happen.
- Be persistent
  - It takes a while to win trust



- Invite people to get involved  
Most people are drawn to being a part of something big!
- Find enjoyment in people  
Quirky, opinionated, shy – if you genuinely enjoy people others will be attracted to your attitude and more likely will want to be around you and support your efforts





# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



# **PUBLIC IS DEFINED AS:**

- **Of or concerning the people as a whole.**
- **Ordinary people in general: the community.**
- **You can refer to people in general or to all the people in a particular country or community as the public.**



# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- A political principle or practice
- Recognized as a right.
- Any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision.
- Is often part of a process not a single event.
- The process by which an organization consults with interested or affected individual(s) and government entities before making a decision.
- Intended to be two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with the goal of achieving better and more acceptable decisions.



# So, what's the point ?





**WE**

**GIVE**

**YOU**

**WINNING**

**SUPPORT**





Smart corporate real estate managers and property developers have discovered that winning local approval for their new, tax-paying, job-creating, profit-making projects is no longer possible without first building public support at the grassroots level.



# WINNING

## UNDERSTANDING THE “LANDSCAPE”

- 72% of Americans prefer the status quo rather than new construction in their communities.
- Most likely NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) opponents of any new development are:
  - 55 to 74 years-old
  - home-owning
  - college-educated
  - politically-independent
  - high-earning individuals — the residents with the most local political clout to get something stopped.



# WINNING

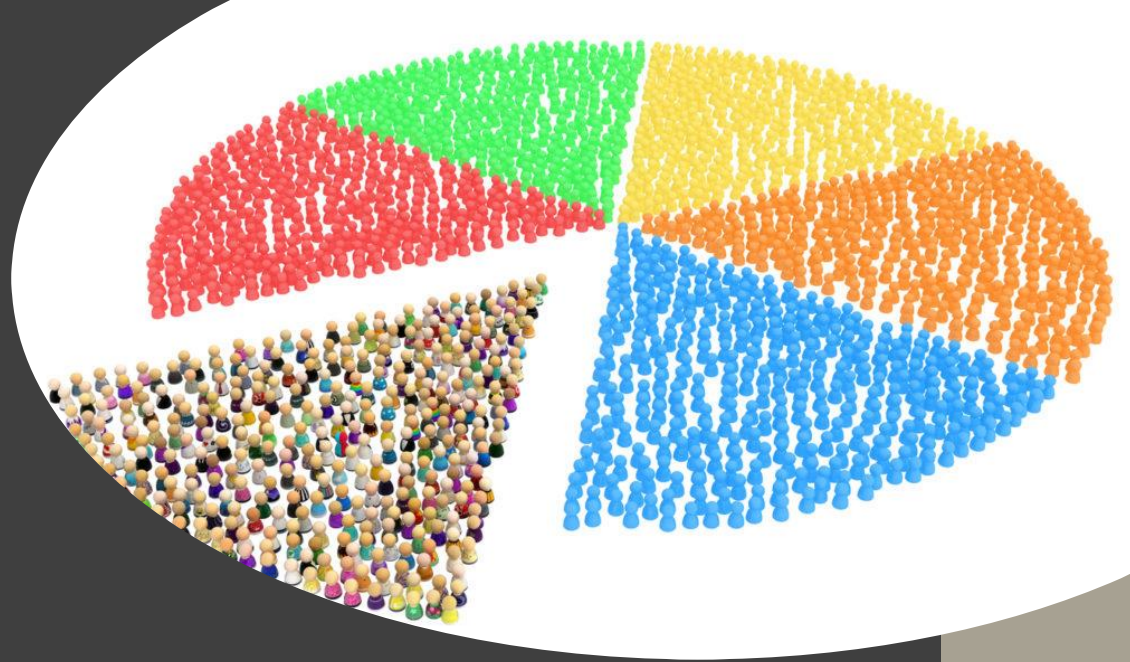
## UNDERSTANDING THE “LANDSCAPE”

Polling data also shows that those who are:

- less educated
- less wealthy, and
- who live in rental housing

are MORE likely to support new development.

Those supporters are less passionate than opponents and therefore are less likely to participate in the approval process.





# WINNING

## UNDERSTANDING THE “LANDSCAPE”

### SO WHAT HAPPENS?

- The vocal opponents move to block.
- Less-passionate supporters fail to attend public hearings and other meetings in the approval process.
- Politicians assume everyone hates the project.



# WINNING

## DO THE WORK BEFORE THE “WORK”



Treat your projects as if it was political candidate running for office.



Developing a campaign to identify, educate, organize, and mobilize supporters must be waged from the start.



First, reach out to neighbors.



Utilize social media and virtual meeting platforms



Residents appreciate the efforts of developers who take the time to explain their plans and solicit feedback.



# WINNING

## BE METHODICAL: AVOID THE “RUSH”



Avoid big community meetings like it's a disease with no cure!



Supporters v. Opposition in the same forum

=

“Entire Community Opposes Project”

# WINNING BE STRATEGIC

- Start with one-on-one meetings:
  - far more productive!
- Offer a less contentious atmosphere for productive discussions with those who may be impacted.
- C.E.O. (Communicate Early and Often)
  - No one wants to be the first to learn about a project by reading about it in the newspaper, or worse, hearing about it from the opponents.





# WINNING

BE STRATEGIC



# WINNING

## IT'S A PROCESS



### Engage the opposition:

- Listen and understand their concerns.
- Develop strategies that mitigate concerns.



### Cultivate supporters living nearest project site first.



### Those who will directly benefit:

- Potential employees
- Land seller
- Local small businesses



### Those who will indirectly benefit:

- Teachers/parents schools will gain a larger budget from increased tax base.





# WINNING

IT'S A MARATHON NOT A SPRINT



**Maintain Communication  
(C.E.O.)**



**Keep track of all contact  
information and ways they  
can assist:**

- Attend a meeting
- Send a letter
- Post a yard sign
- Utilize various social media platforms
- Email or write their officials



**Mobilize your support  
groups:**

- Attend open forums
- Town meetings

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SUMMARY



Winning Support



Understand the landscape



Do the work before the work



Be methodical; avoid the rush



Be strategic



It's a process not an event



Treat like a marathon not a sprint



Engage community through relationship building



A group of people are gathered outdoors on a grassy field, stacking their hands in a circle. In the foreground, a woman with a joyful expression is smiling, wearing a grey zip-up jacket over a teal shirt. To her left, another person in a teal shirt is visible. On the far left, a person wears a grey long-sleeved shirt with a red armband. On the right, a person in a blue shirt also has a red armband. The background shows a lush green landscape with trees under a bright sky. The text 'Thank you' is overlaid in the bottom left corner in a large, white, bold font with a black outline.

**Thank you**