

Community Engagement for Urban Forestry Projects

Amy Ebert, Community Development Educator, Waupaca County
Noah Reif, Community Development Educator, Fond du Lac County
Sarah Schlosser, Organizational and Leadership Development Program Manager



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Objective

Identify important considerations and strategies for engaging community members in urban forestry projects.



Aligning on Context & Definitions

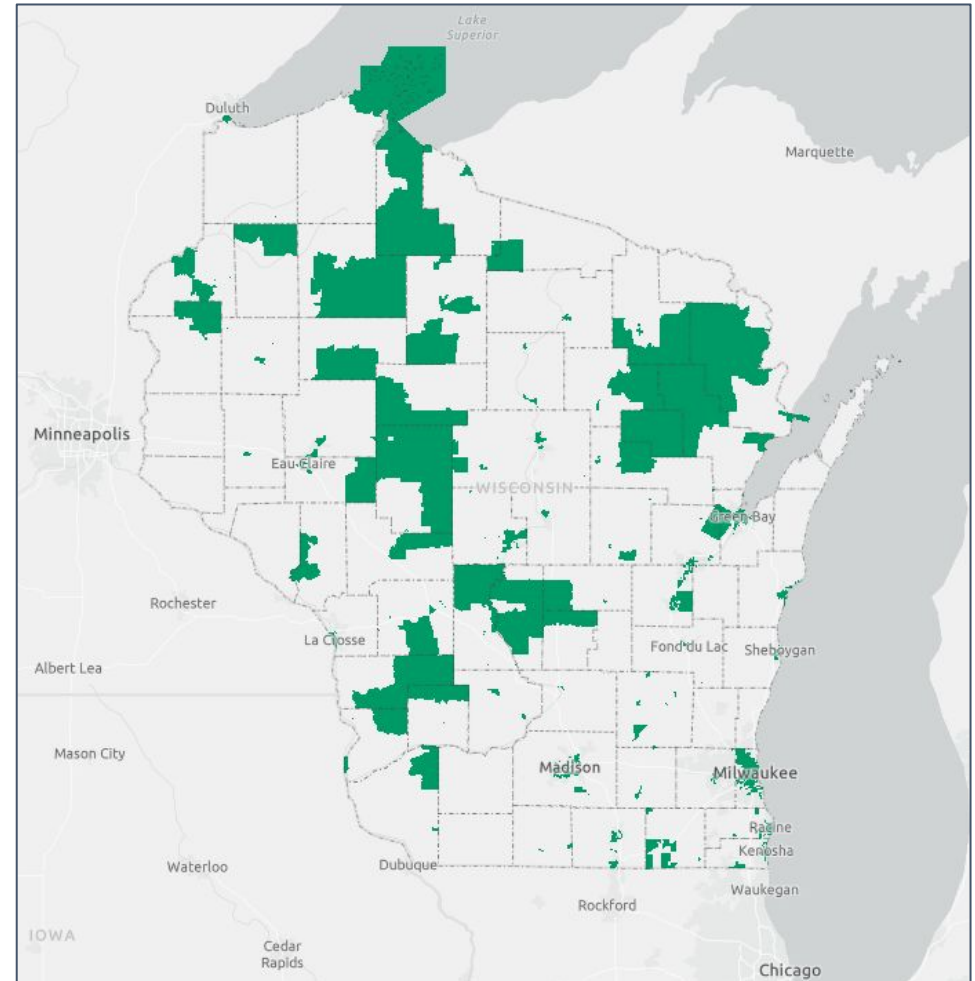


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Grant Requirements

“Projects must occur in or benefit those living in Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)”

“Projects must relate to urban and community forestry... tree management, operations, and education within concentrated development. Projects must benefit DACs.”



“Disadvantaged Communities” (DACs)

Deficit-based language, “Disadvantaged Communities” is the terminology utilized by federal government.



Moving from a deficit based mindset to an asset based approach.

DACs have created strong, resilient, and have created community assets that contribute to the entire state.



Asset Based Community Development

ABCD Principles

1. There is no one we don't need.
2. Everyone has gifts to offer.
3. Asking questions is more powerful than giving answers.
4. Relationships build community.
5. Institutions can not be successful without engaging the rest of the community in solutions.

“Asset Based Community Development is a strategy for sustainable community-driven development.”



Community Assets

A community asset or resource is anything that improves the quality of community life.

Assets include:

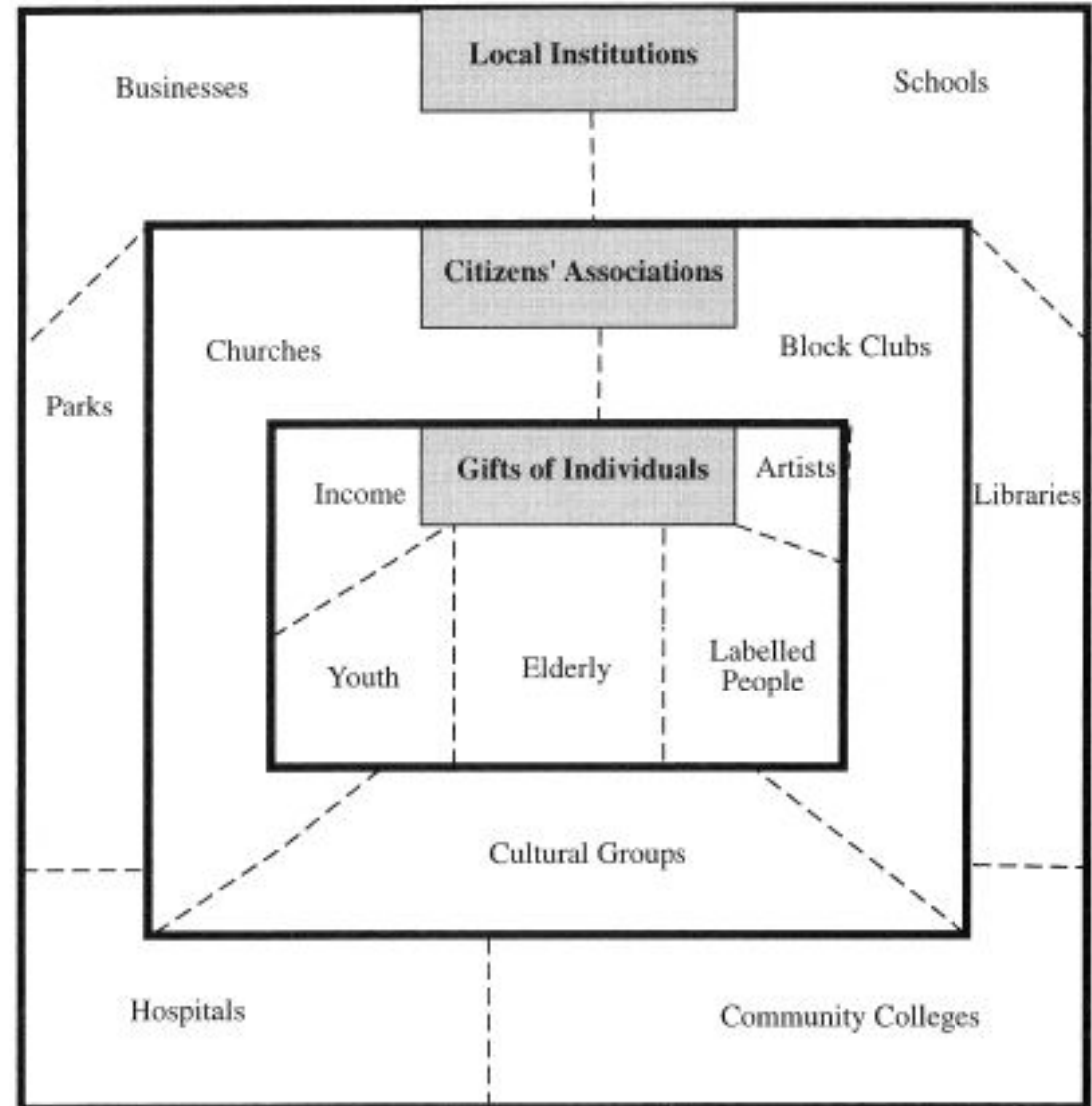
- The capacities and abilities of community members.
- A physical structure or place. For example, a school, hospital, or church. Maybe a library, recreation center, social club.
- A business that provides jobs and supports the local economy.
- Associations of citizens. For example, A Neighborhood Watch or a Parent Teacher Association.
- Local private, public, and non-profit institutions or organizations.



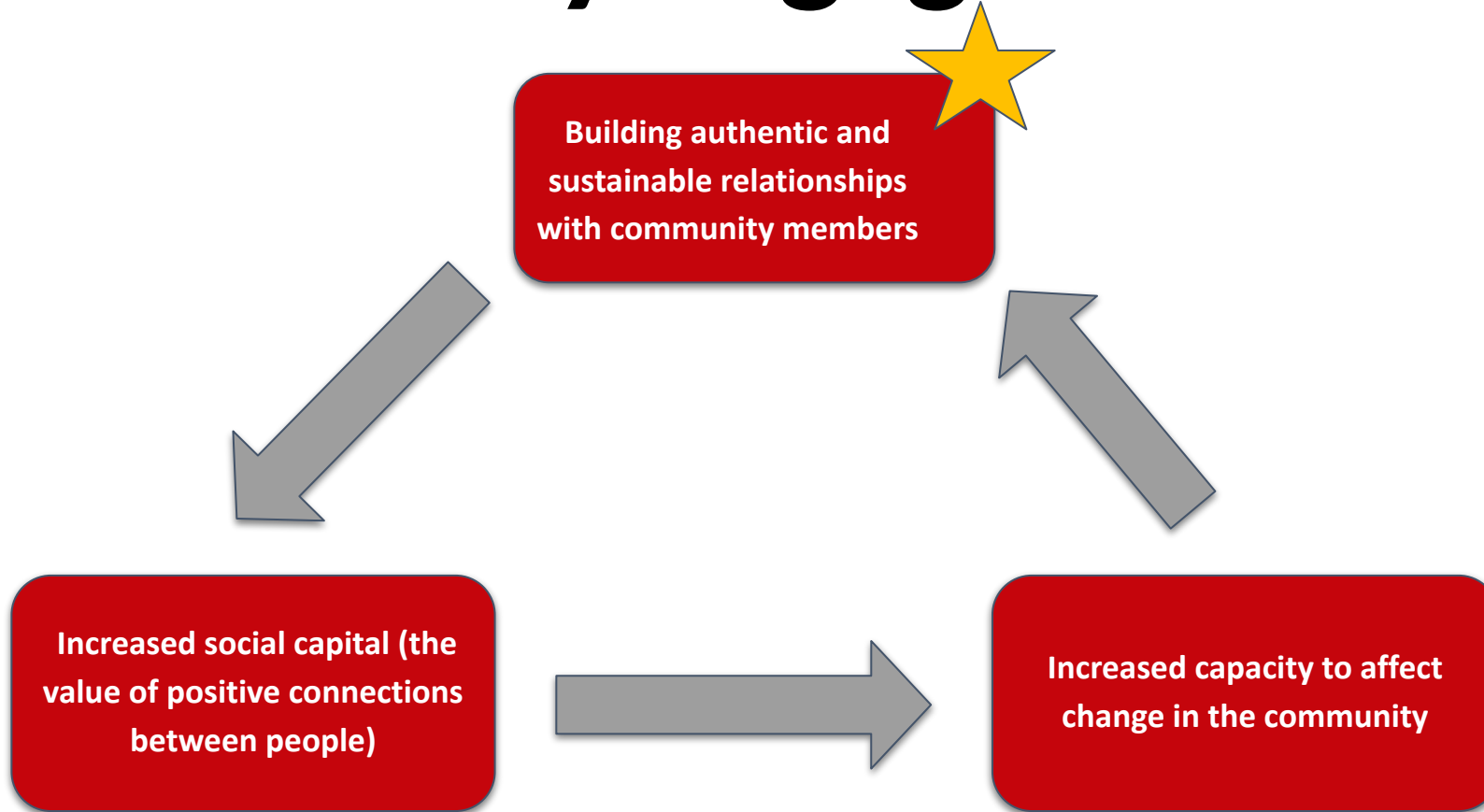
“Asset mapping is an approach to planning and community development centered on identifying and building on a community’s existing resources.

Deep community engagement is a key part of asset mapping, used to uncover existing strengths, skills, and connections that can be leveraged.”

Community Assets Map



Community Engagement



IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal	Provide the public with information.	Obtain public feedback.	Work directly with the public.	Partner with the community in all aspects of the work.	Give power to the community to make final decisions
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed...	...AND we listen to you, acknowledge you, and name how your feedback influenced us	We will work with you.	We will look to you to lead and guide.	We will implement what the community decides.



Source: *IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation* was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

Getting Clear on Who, What, Why & How



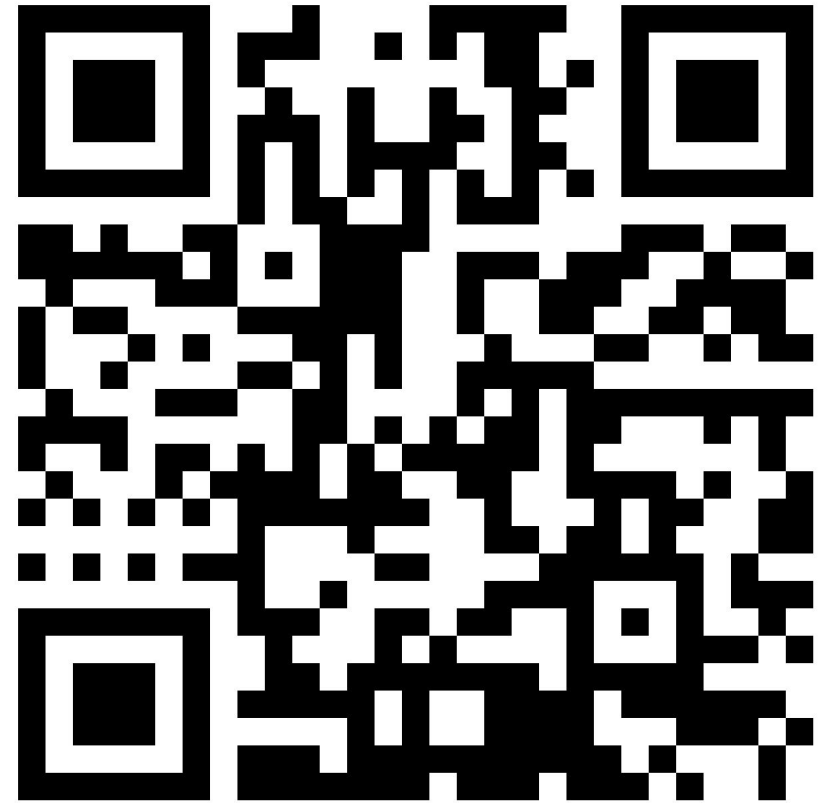
Photo credit: Casey Horner on Unsplash

- **WHO** in the community can bring a valuable perspective and can lend their gifts to this project?
- **WHY** is it important for community members to engage in this project?
- **WHAT** benefit will engagement provide to the broader community? **AND WHAT** benefit will the community members provide to the project?



Community Engagement in Urban Forestry Projects

Padlet Activity



HOW will you
commit to engaging
authentically and
meaningfully with
community
members?



Photo credit: Brandon Jacoby on Unsplash

Operationalizing & Putting These Questions Into Action



Photo credit: Eyoel Kahssay on Unsplash

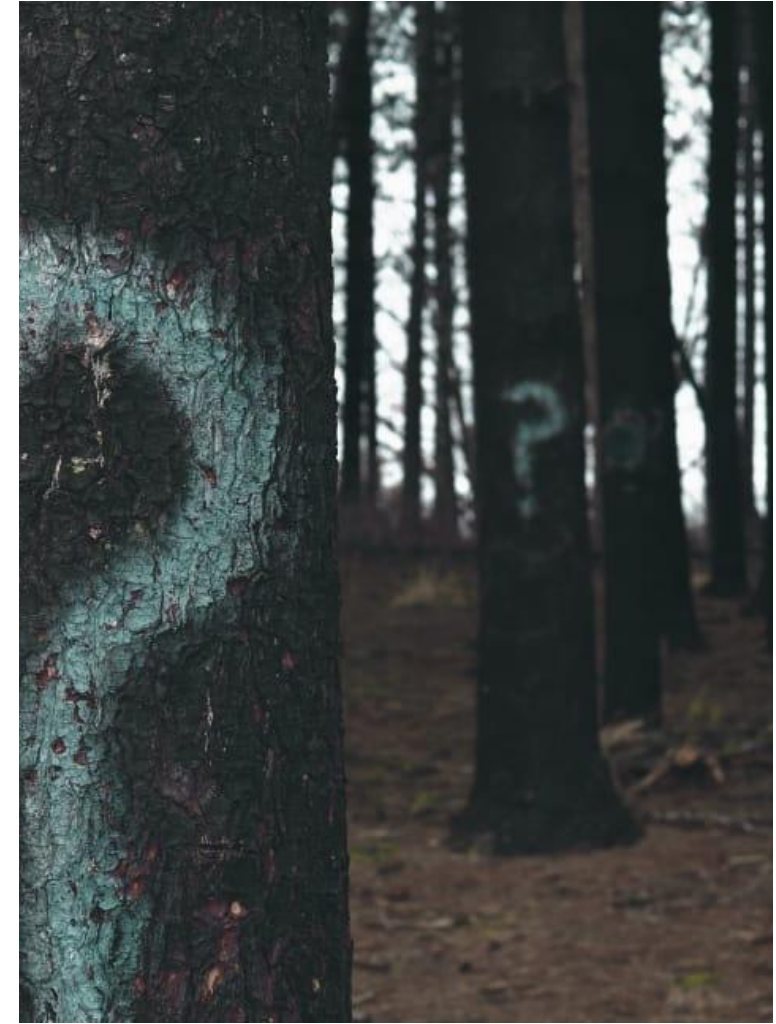


Community Engagement Guidelines

1. Multiple ways to engage.
2. Equitable access.
3. Communicate how input will be used.
4. Celebrate milestones.



How to determine the level of participation?



Situation Assessment

Outcomes/Key Findings

- Identify the key stakeholders
 - Understand stakeholder interests, concerns, and key issues
 - Identify where community input can influence decision-making
 - Limitations that may affect participation
- Can be informal/limited or formal/involved
 - Involves an Internal Assessment and External Assessment

Resource on Conducting a Situation Assessment →

<https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-situation-assessments>



Adapted from the EPA Public Participation Guide.

Stakeholder Mapping



<u>Community Stakeholder Mapping</u>	
<u>High Influence & Low Stakes</u> HANDLE WITH CARE	<u>High Influence & High Stakes</u> HIGH PRIORITY
<u>Low Influence & Low Stakes</u> LOW PRIORITY	<u>Low Influence & High Stakes</u> NEEDS HELP TO PARTICIPATE



Engagement Strategies



Examples of Engagement Strategies

Inform

Strategy	Purpose	Example Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Host educational workshops.★ Have a booth at a neighborhood picnic where you provide information on tree species, care, and where to plant them.★ Interactive exhibits or displays at community center or library.● Social media campaigns● Community newsletters● Online resource hub● Mail residents information about different species of trees, their care, and the ideal locations in which to plant them.	To provide information and raise awareness among community members.	“We will keep you informed about the project’s progress and its impact on the community.”



Examples of Engagement Strategies

Consult

Strategy	Purpose	Example Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Focus groups at the neighborhood school, daycare, or library.★ Hold community workshops where you ask residents' opinions.★ Partner with a local organization to hold a neighborhood listening session or town hall.★ Community advisory panels.★ Engage local youth in surveying their neighbors.<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Social media polls● Provide a QR code for people to access a survey to gather community input.	<p>To gather feedback and incorporate community preferences into decision-making.</p>	<p>“Your input will directly influence our tree planting and care plans.”</p>



Examples of Engagement Strategies

Involve

Strategy	Purpose	Example Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Organize community design/planning sessions where residents collaborate with experts to design tree planting initiatives for their neighborhoods.★ Hold volunteer tree planting events. Involve the local school and neighborhood businesses.★ Partner with youth groups (e.g. 4H, Scouts, FFA) to deliver and help plant trees for those who need physical help.● Provide a variety of ways for residents to register for urban forestry programs (e.g. phone, email, via a web page, or via mail).	<p>To actively engage community in co-creating project plans and solutions.</p>	<p>“We will work together to ensure your vision for a greener community becomes a reality.”</p>



Examples of Engagement Strategies

Collaborate

Strategy	Purpose	Example Promise
<p>★ Form a community planning committee or task force with diverse representation (residents, youth, local businesses, nonprofits) whose responsibility is to guide tree canopy expansion efforts.</p> <p>★ Community-led maintenance teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Partnership agreements with organizations.	<p>To establish collaborative decision-making processes and shared responsibilities.</p>	<p>"We will partner with you to co-manage and sustain tree canopy projects in our community."</p>



Examples of Engagement Strategies

Empower

Strategy	Purpose	Example Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Support community-led tree planting events where residents take the lead in selecting tree species, coordinating planting activities, and organizing maintenance efforts.★ Teach residents how to evaluate the space(s) where they want trees and have them select appropriate trees based on their evaluation.★ Develop a community-led grant program that provides financial assistance to residents who need help with stump removal, planting, or maintenance costs.	<p>To empower residents with decision-making authority and ownership of the project.</p>	<p>“We trust your expertise and leadership in driving positive change through tree canopy initiatives.”</p>



A Forum for Expression



- Allow individuals an opportunity to dream and create new visions for the community
- Give skeptics an opportunity to share reservations and concerns



What are ways you can make your engagement more accessible?



Considerations for Accessible & Equitable Engagement

- There is no “One Size Fits All” when engaging with communities.
- Know your “Why” and acknowledge that your “Why” may not fit the needs of the community
- Engage authentically and with curiosity.



Ask Yourself...

- What will people have to sacrifice to participate?
- Will someone who does not speak the primary language of the organization be able to participate?
- Are you giving people different options to participate?
- What will support their participation?



Social change happens at the speed of relationships, and relationships are built at the speed of trust.

- Various



Final Reflection, Resources, Wrap-up and Q&A



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