

# Facilitation Matters - IAP2 North American 2016 Conference Webinar

Tuesday June 13, 2017

## Case Study 1: Traffic Calming Study

### Issue / Opportunity

When City staff engaged residents living along a street about installing new bicycle lanes, they learned there were many concerns about the amount and speed of traffic through this residential neighbourhood. City Council directed staff to identify traffic calming measures that would enhance safety and accessibility for all road users.

### Engagement Goals

Workshop #1:

- Confirm previously identified safety issues
- Inform community stakeholders of traffic calming options available
- Identify stakeholders preferred options

Workshop #2:

- Gather feedback on 3 concept designs
- Grow support for implementing traffic calming options

### What We Planned

Both workshops were offered on two different days, times, locations. Written feedback forms were also available.

Workshop #1: Small group activities using a workbook as a guide and provided technical information. Background information was provided through a quiz at the beginning of the workshop.

Workshop #2: Stakeholder comments directly on large design concept maps at different stations.

### What Happened

Workshop #1: Workbook was effective reference for participants. It could be taken home and was posted on-line by staff after the workshop. There were challenges with signage, furniture, coffee cups. Some participants expected an open house format, not a workshop.

Workshop #2: most residents arrived expecting a workshop format and participated thoughtfully.

### What We Learned

- Provide creative, high-quality content that levels the knowledge of everyone present
- Pay extra attention to logistical details so that trust is not undermined
- A variety of activities caters to multiple styles of engagement
- A facilitator allows technical experts to be resources

## Case Study 2: – Community Hub Development

### Issue / Opportunity

City Council directed staff to explore the feasibility of developing a neighbourhood hub in an existing City park.

Staff wanted to meet with residents living in the homes adjacent to the park before the community hub committee engaged more broadly with local residents at their visioning event.

### Engagement Goals

- Inform residents adjacent to park of possible hub development in the park
- Understand their desires, concerns and possible ways to address these
- Build positive relationships, ease fears, diffuse high emotions and potential conflict

### What We Planned

Two identical open house events on different days and times. City technical staff answer individual questions, discuss concerns and solutions. Q&A sheets, large of park boundaries and features, written feedback forms.

### What Happened

Many residents arrived at first scheduled open house event in a highly emotional state. Many also expected a whole group presentation and question period, not an open house format. They also wanted their Ward Councillors to be present. Staff decided to change the format of the second event to meet residents' requests.

### What We Learned:

- Ensure marketing and event format aligns with both staff goals and stakeholder expectations
- Ensure facilitation skill matches level of emotion of stakeholders

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- With potentially contentious issues, a neutral facilitator can help
- Adjust mid-course as possible and appropriate, in response to stakeholder needs and feedback

### Case Study 3: Animal Control Bylaw Review

#### Issue / Opportunity

Bylaws related to animal control and responsible pet ownership needed to be reviewed as part of the 5-year cyclical review process, with recommendations to be made to City Council for an updated bylaw.

#### Engagement Goals

- Inform pet owners, pet business owners and other community members about the review process and the issues
- Identify key issues, concerns, needs and wants related to a variety of topics such as exotic animals, feral cats, coyotes, off-leash areas etc.
- Build stakeholder trust and ease fears

#### What We Planned

A multi-stakeholder community working group met for almost two years. Once a draft bylaw had been developed, four identical in-person public meetings were planned, supplemented by online surveys and discussions. The focus of the meetings and survey was on the issues in the draft bylaw that required further community input.

#### What Happened

The meetings were less contentious than originally anticipated. Participation in survey was extremely high. The quality of the feedback gathered was generally high.

#### What We Learned

- A well-designed and facilitated session can offset potential negativity and conflict
- Everyone should have access to similar information upon which to base their comments
- It can be challenging to balance and blend in-person and electronic feedback

### Case Study 4: Community Investment Strategy

#### Issue / Opportunity

The City supported non-profit sector partners in a variety of ways. There was a need for a more cohesive framework that would increase transparency and equity in the ways that the municipality supported local agencies and actors.

#### Engagement Goals

- Input from a variety of non-profit partners about how best to structure the City's community investment processes, ranging from grants to permits to contracts to rentals.

#### What We Planned

Interactive town hall-style meetings were planned, in a large space, involving multiple activity stations and a large facilitation team.

#### What Happened

At the meetings there was positive buzz in the room, the process ran smoothly, and the feedback gathered was used to form the Community Investment Strategy that ultimately resulted.

#### What We Learned:

- Surprising, varied and engaging processes that run smoothly, help diffuse possible negative reactions and build trust with stakeholders.

Rebecca: do we want to add another bullet here?

