

ENGAGING UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

Prepared for

CITY OF NORTH SAINT PAUL

FoHamTraWu
Community Design Center

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December 3, 2013

Paul Ammerman
Economic Development Director
City of North Saint Paul
2400 Margaret Street
North Saint Paul, MN 55109-3020

Dear Mr. Ammerman,

Over the course of the past few weeks, the consultant team at FoHamTraWu has been diligently preparing a participation process proposal that will complement the City of North St. Paul's upcoming visioning efforts. Specifically, this proposal addresses best practices to identify and engage underrepresented and historically marginalized residents who have not been represented in previous planning efforts in the City. In order to engage these local residents on key issues in the community and to better understand their concerns, we have developed a detailed set of engagement strategies and a comprehensive toolkit.

Our set of engagement strategies includes several best practices to identify underrepresented and historically marginalized residents using a variety of sources, including census data, educational data, housing data, and data concerning community-based assets spatially located within the City. We have also developed several outreach and engagement strategies targeted to different underrepresented groups that we believe will effectively reduce their specific barriers to participation and long-term engagement. While many of these strategies are beneficial to all residents, the implementation of this proposal will be especially meaningful for residents who have not had opportunities in the past to participate in previous planning efforts led by the City.

We believe that our approach to engaging underrepresented residents in the City of North St. Paul represents a quality and comprehensive participation process that meets the City's requirements. Our general approach follows the best practices of other long-term engagement processes planned for other historically marginalized and underrepresented communities across the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and draws upon rich resources that exist within the broader community. We also strongly believe that our approach will help generate the public support and local public understanding relative to the City's policies, projects, and quality of life initiatives, needed to develop a community-wide vision document by providing meaningful opportunities for participation.

On behalf of FoHamTraWu, the consultant team would like to thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing this proposal and we look forward to developing a continuing and positive partnership with the City. We believe that developing a positive relationship between the City and its underrepresented residents is key to creating the degree of community buy-in that will result in successful and effective plan implementation.

Sincerest regards,

Ashley Foell

Kadence Hampton

Andrew Tran

Chao Wu

Table of Contents

Approach to the Participation Process.....	4
Proposed Participation Process.....	6
Task 1: Identify Underrepresented Populations.....	7
Task 2: Review of Best Practices.....	17
Task 3: Identify Key Meetings.....	21
Task 4: Engagement Timeline.....	24
Task 5: Develop a Budget and Logistics Plan.....	25
Task 6: Develop and Evaluation Plan.....	26
Task 7: Short- and Long-Term Engagement of Underrepresented Populations.....	27
Conclusion.....	28
References.....	29

Approach to the Participation Process

In response to your request we have designed a creative, engaging, inclusive series of activities that will foster genuine community collaboration. It is important to provide meaningful opportunities for historically underrepresented and marginalized identity groups.

Our overarching goals for the participation process are the following:



To understand what underrepresented means in the context of North Saint Paul.



To identify underrepresented participants based upon this definition and apply the most appropriate practices for engagement.



To create long-term engagement practices for underrepresented participants in the City.

In identifying underrepresented and historically marginalized groups, it is critical to avoid assumptions in determining which groups have not been previously involved in planning efforts carried out by the City. In this proposal, we provide an extensive toolkit that includes strategies which will address the aforementioned goals in an informed and comprehensive manner.

The development of this proposal was partly informed by the recommended process outlined in the Bottineau Transitway Community Engagement Plan, which represents an example of a best practice for designing a participation process for underrepresented groups. With the data currently available, the consulting staff has been able to begin many of these steps but some steps require additional information and workshopping with staff from the City that would be completed if this proposal is selected. The modified seven step process and work that the consulting team has completed is described below:

1. Design Key Messages



(Source: Chapter 7: Community Engagement Plan, Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study)

It is important for the lead agency tasked with facilitating the participation process to design key messages that impart to the community the relevance and value of the process to these residents, to avoid the perception that such opportunities are only offered to satisfy basic participation requirements. By designing key messages, staff and consultants can show residents and other interested stakeholders the City's commitment to creating meaningful and sincere participation opportunities that respect and recognize the community's unique input and knowledge. If this proposal is selected, the consultant staff will work closely with City staff to design these key messages.

2. Identify Barriers

Large sections of this proposal are devoted to identifying basic barriers to participation based on different but general demographic identities using census data. If this proposal is selected, the consulting team will need to complete additional research to identify other underrepresented groups of which only local officials or community advocates may be aware and to gain a better understanding of which underrepresented groups may need additional and special outreach efforts. In lieu of detailed local expert knowledge, this proposal includes some best practices for identifying underrepresented populations.

3. Develop Messages to Reach Target Groups

This step builds upon the work completed in previous steps and can only be performed with the assistance of city staff and its expertise. Once additional underrepresented groups have been identified in step two, City and consulting staff will be better able to tailor outreach and engagement techniques to any recently identified groups, if applicable.

4. Post Messages and Invite Participation

This proposal addresses several best practices for outreach based on basic demographic identities with additional best practices for conducting meaningful and effective public engagement opportunities and meetings. The consulting team has also identified methods to incentivize public attendance at the possible participation opportunities presented in this proposal. If selected, the consulting team will work with city staff to use the best practices for outreach and key messages developed in the previous step to invite participation (detailed description in Task 2).

5. Implement the Plan

The engagement plan outlined in this proposal will be implemented if selected by the City of North St. Paul after the previous steps have been completed.

6. Evaluate Process and Modify

The consultant team has identified some best practices for evaluating the community engagement techniques described in this proposal to better understand the City's progress and the outcomes of public participation. Only after many of these best practices have been employed will the consulting team be able to better understand any gaps in engaging underrepresented groups and what additional outreach strategies are needed. Responsibility for conducting the evaluation would be carried out by the consultant team.

7. Report Progress

Part of this proposal includes the identification of techniques and strategies for documenting the progress and outcomes of the public's participation. The consulting team will be responsible for reporting progress if this proposal is selected by the City.

Proposed Participation Process

1

IDENTIFY UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

1.1 Identify Underrepresented Populations

1.2 Asset Mapping

1.3 Define What “Underrepresented” Means to the City of North Saint Paul

1.4 Stakeholder Analysis

2

REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES

2.1 Best Practices for Outreach

2.2 Best Practices for Data Collection

2.3 Best Practices for Meetings

3

IDENTIFY KEY MEETINGS

3.1 Phase 1 Meetings

3.2 Phase 2 Meetings

3.3 Phase 3 Meetings

3.4 Phase 4 Meeting

4

DEVELOP AN ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

4.1 Survey Community for Availability

4.2 Reference Holiday & Activity Calendar

4.2 Reference Holiday & Activity Calendar

4.2 Reference Holiday & Activity Calendar

5

DEVELOP A BUDGET & LOGISTIC PLAN

5.1 Phase 1 Meetings

5.2 Phase 2 Meetings

5.3 Phase 3 Meetings

5.4 Phase 4 Meetings

6

DEVELOP AN EVALUATION PLAN

6.1 Evaluation of the Participation Process

6.2 Evaluation After Adoption of Community-Wide Vision Plan

7

SHORT- & LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT OF UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

7.1 Building Trust

7.2 Avoiding Engagement Fatigue

7.3 Feedback Mechanisms

TASK

1 IDENTIFY UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

The City of North St. Paul is home to a population that is diverse in terms of its racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic identities. While a particular population or community based on a single identity, such as race or income level, may be underrepresented in the community, it is important to recognize that this group may not be underrepresented in terms of participation around planning processes. One finding from the Bottineau Transitway Community Engagement Plan is that it may be erroneous to assume that a population or community requires special outreach and engagement techniques unless there is a historical lack of participation from the aforementioned population or if other barriers to participation are present. If this proposal is selected, the consultant team will work closely with city staff and other officials to better understand how different underrepresented groups may face barriers to participation and will then develop key messages to target these groups.

"[An] interesting finding from the research is the erroneous assumption that all ethnic and racial minorities have significant barriers to engagement due to issues of English proficiency, low incomes, or the like. In Golden Valley, for example, the Russian immigrant population, which is considered racially white, is often underrepresented at community meetings because of low English proficiency. Whereas in other parts of the Bottineau Corridor, African immigrants are often bilingual and speak English and regularly attend community meetings. Simply stated, ethnicity should not presume the necessity for special outreach and engagement planning, unless other factors such as poverty, language and low educational attainment are also considered." - Chapter 7: Community Engagement Plan, Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study, 2013

DELIVERABLES:

- Dissimilarity and isolation indexes for race, ethnicity, and poverty
- Maps detailing race, ethnicity, poverty, and language by block group
- Asset map and heat maps for each asset category
- List of underrepresented groups with barriers to participation
- List of stakeholders and organizations representing underrepresented groups
- Power-Interest grid of stakeholders and organizations

1.1 Identify Underrepresented Populations

Analyze Census Data

Census data serves as a critical starting point for identifying possible underrepresented groups. Specific indicators to look at include race and ethnicity, country of origin, gender, age, income, employment, educational attainment, poverty status, language spoken at home, disability, household type, and residential tenure. While some of these demographic data are important in and of themselves, it is important to recognize that residents have complex identities based on the interplay of these factors, which may create differential barriers for members within a broader group. Despite this caveat, the importance of analyzing specific demographic data is highlighted below.

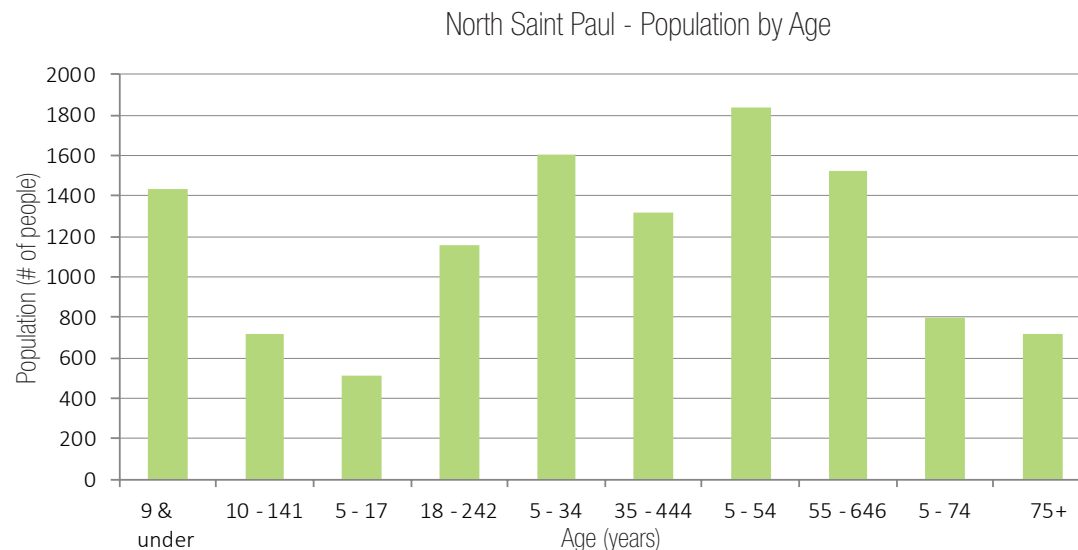
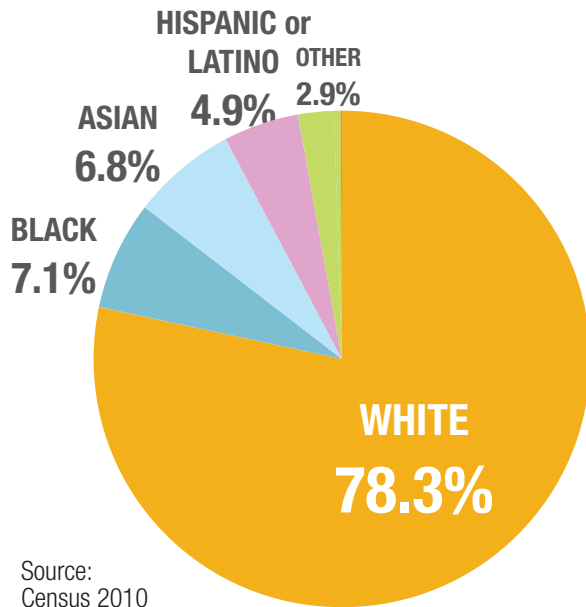
Looking at the racial and ethnic breakdown of a population provides the most basic look at underrepresented groups and can illuminate which groups should be targeted for outreach. Racial and

ethnic data can be analyzed by mapping census data according to block group to see if there are spatial concentrations of groups, which may lead to the identification of single or mixed ethnic-identity neighborhoods. However, dissimilarity and isolation indexes should be performed to better understand if members of minority groups are spatially segregated and/or isolated. The dissimilarity index measures the “evenness” of the distribution of the members belonging to a specific minority group across block groups compared to white residents.

A high dissimilarity index indicates that members of a minority group may be highly concentrated in specific block groups and less integrated into white neighborhoods. Similarly, the isolation index measures the likelihood that a member of a minority group may interact with neighbors of a different race or ethnicity. A high isolation index indicates that minorities may not have much interaction with white residents and are isolated from the dominant population in their daily lives. By running these indexes, consultant and city staff can better understand the degree of race- and ethnic-specific outreach that may be needed if populations are highly concentrated based on this aspect of identity.

Looking at the country of origin for immigrants can be important to examine in order to understand how these populations may engage with local government and their level of comfort in participating in democratic processes. Residents hailing from politically unstable areas of the world may not be as familiar with public participation opportunities and could require special outreach and educational strategies. It is also important to anticipate that some immigrant residents may not be comfortable engaging with local government officials due to differential immigration statuses and fear of immigration authorities. However, it is important to keep in mind that not all immigrants require special outreach strategies as some resident immigrants may have higher levels of education and experience with democratic societies.

Examining the age breakdown of a population can also help to identify significant youth and senior populations, each which may experience different barriers to participation that require specially designed engagement opportunities. Youth may represent an untapped source of creative input and feedback as well a pathway for disseminating information to parents of children from other underrepresented groups.



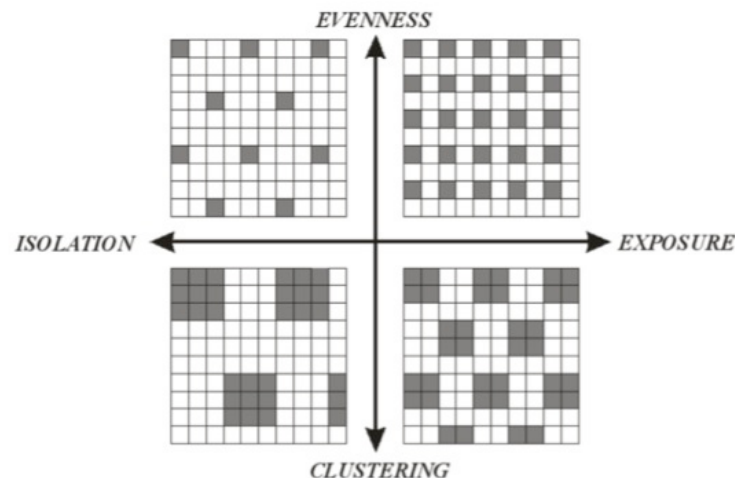
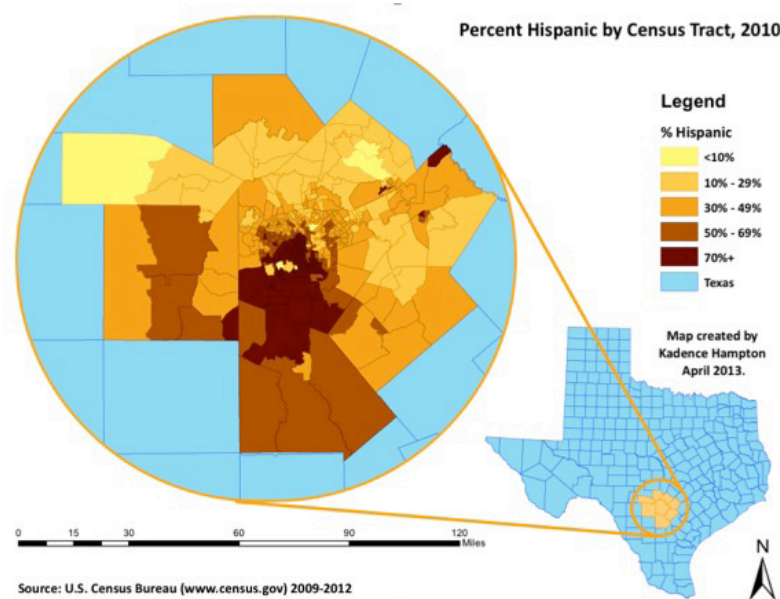
Case Study: Dissimilarity and Isolation Indexes for the Hispanic Population the San Antonio-New Braunfels Metropolitan Statistical Area in 2010

The dissimilarity and isolation indexes for the Hispanic population living in the San Antonio MSA were performed using the 2010 census data. Hispanics had a dissimilarity index of .42, which means that 42% of the Hispanic population living in the San Antonio MSA would have to move to another census tract to achieve perfect evenness with their white counterparts. Interpreted differently, nearly half of the total Hispanic population would have to relocate to fully integrate into all neighborhoods across the MSA.

The isolation index for Hispanics was higher at .65, which means that approximately 65% of the Hispanic population is exposed only to other Hispanics relative to their residential locations. Interpreted differently, Hispanics across the metropolitan area were most likely to live in census tracts where about 65% of their neighbors were also Hispanic and 35% of their neighbors were non-Hispanics. This degree of isolation for Hispanics is relatively high considering that just over half the total population of the San Antonio MSA identified themselves as Hispanic in 2010.

The significance of having an uneven minority population that is isolated from the non-minority populations is that there are large ethnic concentrations spread across a geographic area. The matrix below provides an example of the general spatial patterns of ethnic and minority groups according to different combinations of dissimilarity and isolation indexes. In the case of San Antonio's Hispanic population, outreach efforts for engagement opportunities would have to be targeted to the specific census tracts with high proportions of Hispanics spread across the lower half of the MSA.

Map 1. Percent Hispanic by Census Tract in 2010



Source:
 Feitosa, F. F.; Câmara, G.; Monteiro, A. M. V.; Koschitzki, T.; Silva, M.P.S. "Global and Local Spatial Indices of Urban Segregation". Forthcoming in the International Journal of Geographical Information Science.

Identifying populations with disabilities can help to understand what types of special outreach and engagement strategies, if any, are needed. Although persons with disabilities may not necessarily require special outreach in and of themselves, some disabilities may require special materials such as handouts transcribed in braille or a sign language interpreter. While census data is a good starting point for looking at other demographic data, the census may provide conflicting and incomplete data about persons with disabilities. The American Community Survey (ACS) developed and tested new disability questions in 2008, so recent ACS data is the most reliable data for examining populations with disabilities.

Household data is important to look at in order see what kinds of families are present in the city. Families with children and single parent households may require special engagement strategies, particularly those which incorporate childcare, to allow adults to effectively participate in meetings and other opportunities that require undivided attention.

Other underrepresented groups may include low literacy and limited English proficiency groups which may be discovered by looking at educational attainment, income, employment, poverty status, and language spoken at home. All of these factors are likely to influence one another, especially as it pertains to a resident's literacy and English proficiency. Lower levels of educational attainment, and therefore low literacy rates, can and do influence one's income and access to employment opportunities which further impacts rates of poverty. Languages spoken at home other than English may also contribute to limited English proficiency, although limited English proficiency for nonnative English speakers does not preclude literacy in other languages.

North St. Paul, Minnesota

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3
STP 258

Hide age breakdown (all languages)
Hide ability to speak English (all languages)

Click a language name for details

Sort alphabetically Collapse all

	Ages 5 - 17	18 - 64	65 +	Total
English	2,100	6,910	1,320	10,330
All languages other than English combined	95	260		355
Speak English "well" or "very well"	70	185		255
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	25	75		100
Spanish	95	130		225
Speak English "well" or "very well"	70	120		190
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	25	10		35
Chinese		60		60
Speak English "well" or "very well"		20		20
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"		40		40
Serbian		40		40
Speak English "well" or "very well"		15		15
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"		25		25
French		30		30
Speak English "well" or "very well"		30		30
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"				
Totals:	2,195	7,170	1,320	10,685

Data are estimates based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. Data are not displayed where there were insufficient samples with which to compute an estimate.

Analyze Educational Data

While census data is a good starting point for identifying underrepresented groups, the census may not adequately represent all groups living in a community, particularly those that may be undocumented. Regardless of immigration and citizenship status, all children in the U.S. have the right to a public education. Looking at educational data represents one of the next best steps to identify additional information about race, ethnicity, income, migrant status, literacy rates, and other demographic data.

SCHOOLS IN NORTH ST. PAUL

Public

North High School
Covern Elementary School
Richardson Elementary School
L. C. Webster Elementary School

Private

St. Peter Catholic School
Christ Evangelical Lutheran School

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_St._Paul,_Minnesota

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) website (<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch>) provides information about public schools across the nation. This information is updated annually and provides contact information for each school, including the total number of enrolled students, students by race, the number of students on Free and Reduced Price Meals, and the number of migrant students. Information for each school can be downloaded individually or as a spreadsheet by city or county. In addition, the NCES site also has information for private schools and public libraries.

Another website that can provide information about educational resources is the nonprofit organization GreatSchools, Inc. This tool can supplement the information collected through the NCES because it also provides reviews and ratings written by parents of enrolled children. The GreatSchools, Inc. website (<http://www.greatschools.net>) also includes information about students by race, ethnicity, eligibility for Free and Reduced Price Meals, and even student reading levels. Conducting interviews with school principals and English as a Second Language (ESL) coordinators at each school can yield additional insight into the literacy and language proficiency of students and their parents.

Analyze Housing Data

In addition to looking at census and educational data, examining housing data may identify other underrepresented populations that may not appear underrepresented using other data. For instance, it is unlikely that all members of the white population are affluent and those who are low-income may require additional outreach efforts and incentives for participation. Looking at housing data may provide such insights into these and other underrepresented groups not readily apparent in the existing data.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development website (<http://www.hud.gov/apps/section8/index/cfm>) provides information on public housing and subsidized apartments. This information is available by city and includes contact information for the building manager, the building address, and the type of building, such as elderly, disabled, or family. Identifying public housing may yield insight about underrepresented groups living in these units that may not be considered underrepresented due to another identity or demographic data.

The Administration on Aging website (<http://www.aoa.gov>) also includes information about senior care and housing facilities. This tool can be used to find the contact information, address, and type of facility for each location.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

For Analyzing Educational Data:

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch>
<http://www.greatschools.net>

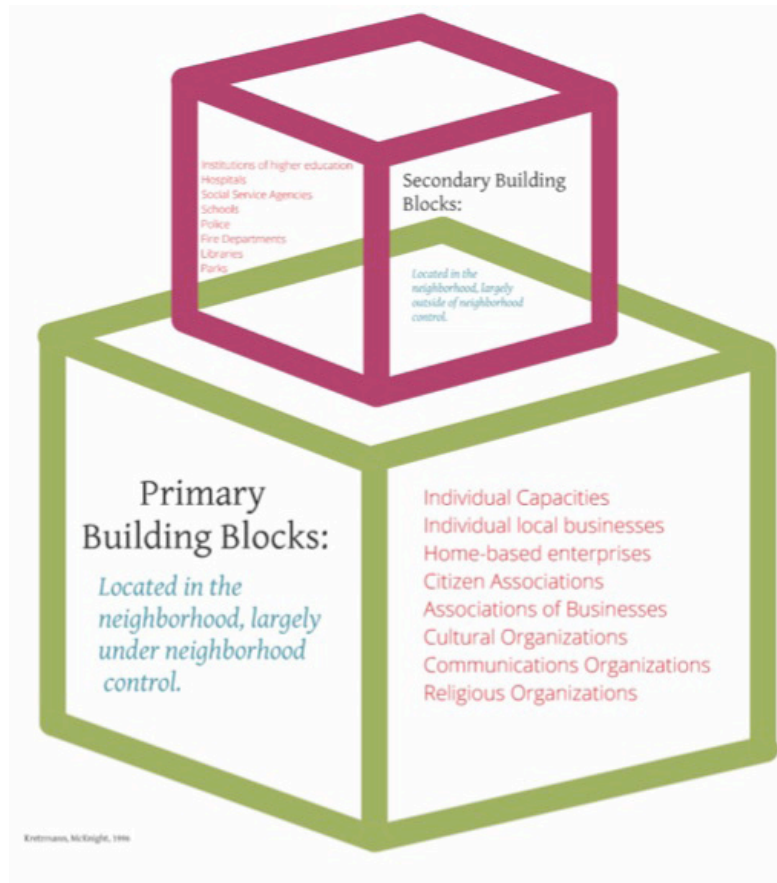
For Analyzing Housing Data:

<http://www.hud.gov/apps/section8/index/cfm>
<http://www.aoa.gov>

1.2 Asset Mapping

Another way to learn more about which groups may be underrepresented is to map the assets of the city and scope the area for resident, patron, and customer input. An assets-based approach to identifying underrepresented groups provides opportunities to build upon and expand capacities, skills, resources, and local knowledge. The primary building blocks of community-based assets, which are located in the neighborhood and largely under neighborhood control include local businesses, citizen associations, cultural organizations, and religious institutions. The secondary building blocks of community-based assets are located within a neighborhood but are largely outside neighborhood but within a broader local agency's control. Some secondary building blocks include schools, hospitals, police, and fire departments.

Identifying and mapping these assets can provide a starting point for staff to survey residents, patrons, and customers in order to discover additional underrepresented groups not previously discovered using the previous best practices. Mapping community-based assets can also make this search much more efficient by targeting areas in the community where different populations may frequent, such as churchgoers and patrons of cultural organizations.

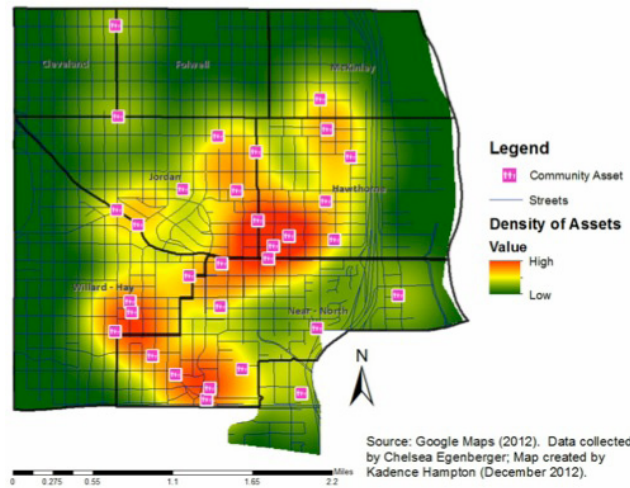


Source: Chelsea Egenberger 2012, adapted from Kretzmann and McKnight 2006.

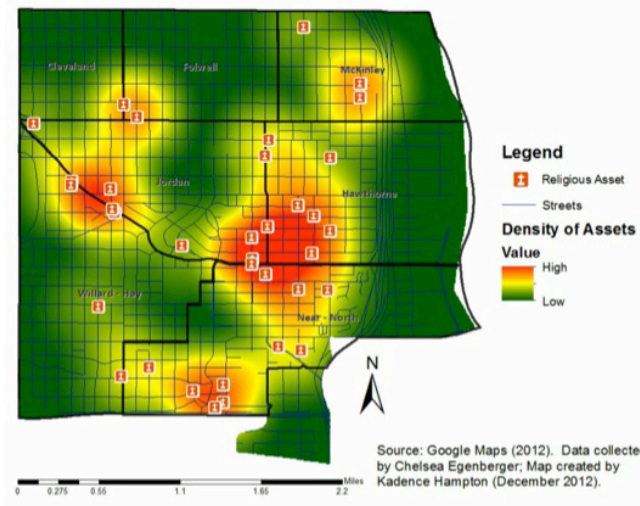
Case Study: North Minneapolis Community-based Asset Mapping

Community-based assets were identified using Google Maps and geocoded into the ArcMap GIS application. These assets were subdivided into different categories, which include community, business, education, religious, and service categories. The community, business, and religious categories include mostly primary assets, which are largely under the control of individuals and groups located within the different neighborhoods of North Minneapolis. The education and service assets are mostly secondary assets, which are under the control and influence of broader agencies and city departments, such as the fire and police departments.

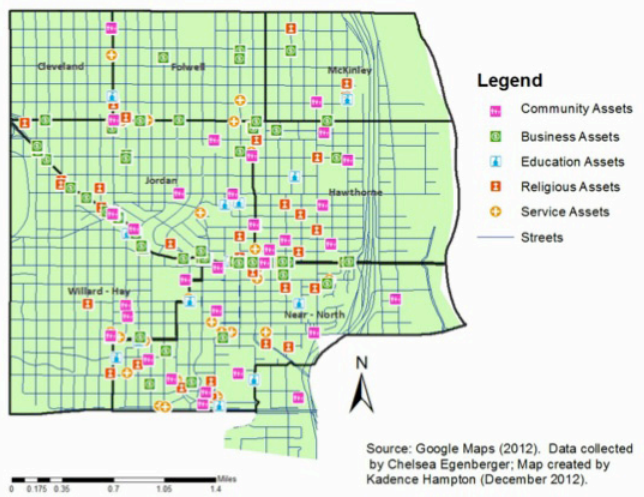
For each category of assets, a heat map was created to show the concentration of different assets as well as the geographic distribution of assets, which may or may not reflect locational access for residents in the wider North Minneapolis area. By creating these heat maps, deficiencies in coverage by one or more categories of assets could be discovered in order to better understand which residents may not live within a reasonable walking or transit distance of a particular set of assets.



Map 2. Heat Map of Service-related Community-based Assets



Map 3. Heat Map of Religious-related Community-based Assets



Map 1. Community-based Assets in North Minneapolis

It is extremely important to understand how different community-based assets may or may not be accessible to the wider population. For instance, the majority of the wider North Minneapolis community is not within reasonable walking distance of most service-related assets, so outreach efforts targeted primarily to these service assets may miss a large proportion of the wider population. However, the different religious institutions of North Minneapolis are more evenly distributed across the broader community with greater accessibility for more residents via walking, so a better strategy may be to target outreach efforts to religious institutions for the population of North Minneapolis.

1.3 Define What “Underrepresented” Means to the City of North St. Paul

After performing the steps above to identify possible underrepresented groups as well as attempting to understand why and how these groups may have been historically marginalized in past participation processes, the City should define what underrepresented means to North St. Paul. It is extremely important that the City defines who and what these underrepresented groups are to better target outreach and engagement efforts that reduce barriers to participation for each group.

In order to better target underrepresented groups, which may include groups that have additional barriers to participation depending on the City’s definition, it is important to understand their specific barriers to participation. It is recommended to create a table that highlights the barriers and appropriate outreach and engagement strategies for each group; several best practices are outlined in Task 2 and can be used to inform the development of this table.

Using demographic data available through sources such as the U.S. Census and the Bottineau Transitway Community Engagement Plan identifies the following underrepresented populations: African-Americans, African Immigrants, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islanders, persons with low incomes and female heads of households, person with limited English proficiency, persons with low education attainment, zero car households, persons with disabilities (sight or hearing impairment, physical mobility, youth (age 14 to 24) and seniors (age 65 and older). Maps were then created using this demographic data to identify possible concentrations of underrepresented populations. (Chapter 7: Community Engagement Plan, Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study)

TARGETED GROUP	BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT	ACTIVITIES FOR INCLUSION
<p>Young Populations Young people make a significant percentage of low income people who live throughout the Corridor. Ethnic minority groups’ youth are the poorest groups in every community, but most significantly in North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and Brooklyn Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low- educational attainment • Awareness • Time • Limited civic engagement experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Media, contests, surveys with incentives gift card to local businesses 2. A Meeting-in-a-Box gives youth all the materials necessary to hold a successful self-guided meeting. A volunteer, who could be a responsible student or adult, facilitates the meeting with an instruction sheet and discussion guide. 3. Host focus groups and surveys at Adult Basic Education Centers 4. Host open houses and small group engagement meetings in high schools, North Hennepin Community College and Dunwoody College and provide involvement incentives. Provide taxi vouchers for attendees. 5. Partner with trusted youth advocates to serve as focus group facilitators, staff information booths, conduct surveys and street outreach. 6. Conduct street outreach at places frequented by young people (Brunswick Entertainment Center, Brooklyn Park, YMCA, North Minneapolis). 7. Develop partnerships with YWCA, YMCA, and youth service organizations. 8. COO grantees working with the ethnic minorities should reach out to young people.
<p>New Immigrants New immigrants and elders in some ethnic minority groups have limited English proficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low- educational attainment • Limited civic engagement experience • Awareness 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. COO grantees and other community engagement providers (appendix 4) serve many of the ethnic minority groups and partnerships with other social service organizations. 2. Mass media <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Place ads in ethnic newspapers; Media Directory http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/refugee/ethnicmedia.pdf 3. Host open houses in public housing projects, low income apartments, at schools, faith based institutions, where new immigrants frequent etc. and provide involvement incentives. Provide taxi vouchers for attendees. 4. COO providers’ language services <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. ACER- Nigerian and Liberian and French b. Asian Economic Development Association- Laotian, Hmong, Vietnamese c. Asian Media Access – Hmong and Laotian d. Harrison Neighborhood Association- Lao, Hmong, French e. La Asamblea de Derechos Civiles – Spanish f. Masjid An- NUR – Somali 5. Host focus groups and surveys at English as Second Language and Adult Basic Education Centers

Source: Ch. 7 Community Engagement Plan, Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study

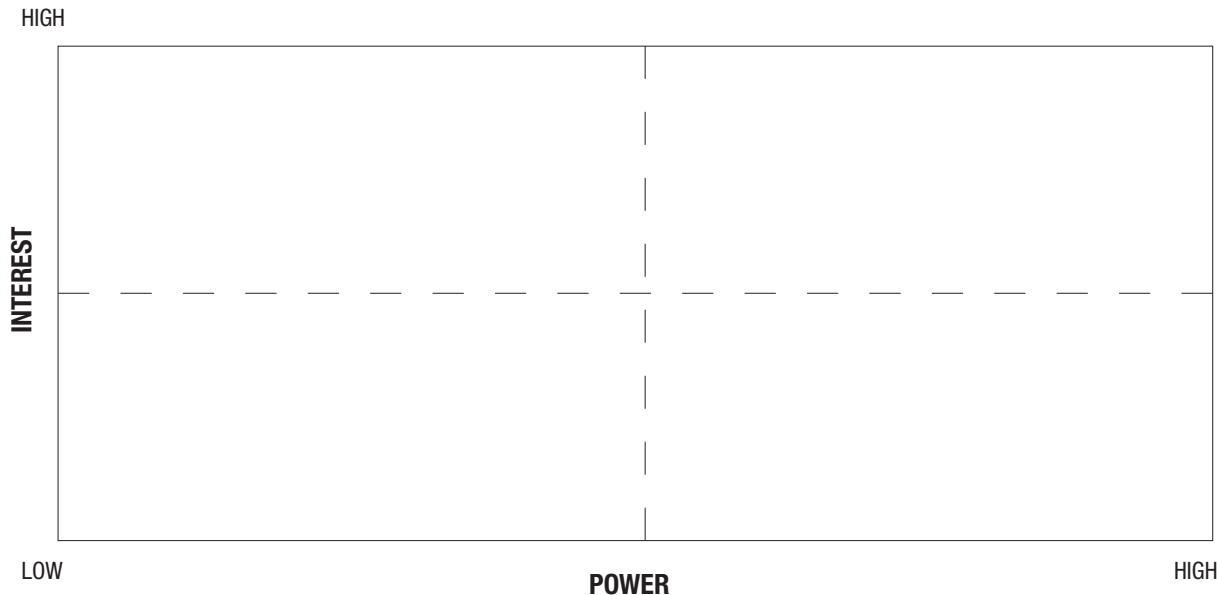
1.4 Stakeholder Analysis

Identify Community Organizations and Trusted Advocates

After underrepresented groups have been identified, appropriate community organizations and “trusted advocates” should be further identified to represent these historically underrepresented groups. Depending on the City’s definition of “underrepresented,” there may be a need to designate and train trusted advocates to represent the interests and needs of underrepresented groups for which special interest groups or organizations do not exist. It is also important to keep in mind that not everyone who belongs to a particular demographic group will belong to the related special interest group or organization if such an organization exists; there may need to be additional advocates to represent the needs and interests of individuals not currently represented by existing organizations.

Power-Interest Grids

Understanding the power relations between different community organizations and interested parties can also help to identify groups that may be underrepresented based upon their set of values and needs for their community. One way to address these power relations is to list community organizations, interested stakeholders, and related citizens or business associations and graph their level of interest versus their level of influence regarding a specific planning or participation issues using a power-interest grid (see graphic below). Some interest groups may have great interest in an issue, but limited ability to influence the outcomes of the decisionmaking process. Conversely, there may be organizations and other groups with much influence but limited interest in affecting the outcomes of certain processes. Building consensus, coalitions, and collaborative partnerships between organizations with differential power-interest capabilities can be an effective tool to empower historically marginalized and underrepresented communities.



ENGAGING UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY’S TRUSTED ADVOCATE MODEL:

The Trusted Advocate model has recently been recognized nationally as a way to engage underrepresented communities and has been successful in Seattle, Washington and Oakland, California. The idea is to commission a member of underrepresented communities to lead engagement within their community. Trusted advocates are deeply connected within their communities and are sensitive or aware of cultural and language differences.

This model has been recently utilized in Minneapolis for the Metro Transit Central Corridor Transit Service Study (CCTSS). In relation to CCTSS the Trusted Advocates chosen were educated about transit service planning and aided in the development of an engagement toolkit to “help advocates gather and document information and feedback from their communities.” The Trusted Advocates then will report their findings back to the planners and work together to make sure the voices of the community are heard, and their ideas are considered.

The Trusted Advocate model would be particularly useful in engaging underrepresented residents in North St. Paul because it would begin to build trust and open the door for long-term engagement in the City. Because there is already a model for it within the Twin Cities, the Trusted Advocate model is a valuable tool for future planning processes.

Source: http://dcc-stpaul-mpls.org/sites/dcc-stpaul-mpls.org/files/images/u5/Trusted-Advocate_view.pdf Study

Recognize Codes and Symbols

It is also important to understand how and why underrepresented groups may have been marginalized in past participation process and how this influences their participation in future opportunities. Many marginalized communities may have a historic distrust of government agencies and little interest in participating in related processes, so it is important to understand how to effectively address these concerns. Planning, city, and consultant staff should be aware of different codes and symbols used by historically marginalized groups as well as the historical context for these alternative ways of communicating. Groups that have experienced segregation and domination by groups historically in power have likely developed special symbols and speech patterns. These may be partly derived from traditional ethnic or other identity-specific cultures, but are nonetheless directly derived from histories of unequal power and segregation. Members of the consultant team are trained experts in recognizing these codes and symbols and will be able to navigate these situations during participation opportunities.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

North St. Paul Area Foodshelf

2538 E. Seppala Blvd
North St. Paul MN 55109
651.770.1309

Store to Door

1935 West County Road B2
Suite #250
Roseville, MN 55113
651.642.1892

North St. Paul Green

651.777.3493

North St. Paul Historical Society & Museum

2666 7th Avenue
North St. Paul MN 55109
651.747.2432

Merrick Inc.

3210 Labore Road
Vadnais Heights, MN 55110
651.789.6200

Museum of Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts

2640 7th Ave E
North St. Paul MN 55109
651.748.2880

Rotary Club of North St. Paul, Maplewood, and Oakdale

North St Paul, MN 55109
PO Box 9248
(651) 321-FLAG

The Toy Shelf, Inc.

2553 7th Avenue
North St. Paul MN 55109
651.777.0910

TASK

2

REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES

Every city is unique in history and make-up of residents, geography, and resources. For this reason, each city should have a unique participation process. In this task, we will provide best practices for engaging underrepresented participants in relation to specific demographic groups, outreach, data collection and analysis, and meetings. It is important to note, however, that the methods need to be tailored to the character and context of North St. Paul.

DELIVERABLES:

- Best practices for outreach will be determined in relation to specific populations
- A clear idea of how to collect data from different groups
- Best practices associated with designing effective meetings and an inclusive participation process

2.1 Best Practices for Outreach

Train Trusted Advocates

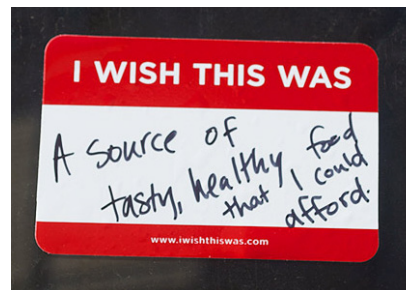
Training trusted advocates from different underrepresented groups can overcome a number of barriers. Particularly, respected members of the community can facilitate the spread of information by word of mouth, especially to those residents with low literacy and limited English proficiency. In addition to serving as language interpreters, trusted advocates can serve as informal interviewers to collect information about key issues and concerns from their communities since they will be well positioned to recognize non-verbal and body language cues while making residents feel comfortable. In addition, residents with a history of government distrust may be more likely to talk openly with trusted advocates that more closely reflect their race and age. Relying on the skills and connections of trusted advocates can reduce the need for hiring additional interpreters. Additionally providing monetary compensation for trusted advocates can signal a commitment on behalf of the City to the economic well-being of, and genuine interest in, supporting underrepresented communities.

Canvas Local Businesses and Churches

Often times, local business owners and church leaders serve as representatives for underrepresented groups and are inherently respected members of the community. Local businesses with owners that have not previously been involved in planning processes will be canvassed and made aware of the importance of their participation. Religious institutions will also be visited during the outreach phase of the process. A partnership with a local church is extremely beneficial because meeting updates and other events may be advertised during announcements, in bulletins, or in conjunction with a religious service.

Public Art

Public art can be employed in a variety of ways to increase awareness about the participation process to create a community-wide vision. Public art can come in a variety of formats, ranging from permanent sculptures, displays or murals, to temporary installations at a variety of scale. For instance, the sticker pictured below is a useful tool for raising awareness about issues and needs within a community because they are attractive and eye-catching. This technique could be particularly useful for the City of North St. Paul because it could start conversation and spark interest with people that have not traditionally been involved in planning processes due to lack of interest. We will use a similar method before the first meeting and up until the last meeting to gather consensus and creative public art outreach ideas for North St. Paul.



Source: <http://candychang.com/i-wish-this-was/>

CASE STUDY

Seward Neighborhood Group: Community Storytelling

Bringing Everyone to the Table

The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) organized weekly conversations in hopes of achieving diversity in the Seward neighborhood at local events, in community organizations and boards, and in leadership roles. The SNG board recognized that the board does not really reflect the neighborhood, thus recognizing the need to have broad representation through conversations and decisions that recognizes the entire neighborhood.

First, Build Trust

Achieving a more diverse leadership required increased communication between residents. These conversations fostered relationships that allowed residents to know their neighbors.

The SNG board created space for East African residents to express their hardships through building friendships first. These relationships alleviated the difficulty for these residents to discuss issues and address questions that were painful and emotional.

Thus, the storytelling sessions were the result of a series of community conversations between a diverse group of residents and stakeholders from the neighborhood.

Source: <http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2013/08/15/community-storytelling-project-building-relationships-through-stories>

Newsletters

Newsletters are a traditional way to advertise public meetings and have their usefulness in reaching particular underrepresented groups. We will send the newsletters through mail, e-mail, and social media outlets. Newsletter may also be posted in different community spaces such as parks, bus stops, laundromats, and discount stores. Other effective strategies to disseminate newsletters are partnering with local grocery store managers to place flyers in shopping bags or to send newsletters to local schools to be sent home with children to give to their parents. Despite the usefulness of this approach, there should be consideration for literacy rates, English proficiency, and access to online media and resources as this is not the most effective tool to reach all underrepresented groups.

Press Releases

The local news and radio stations will be made aware of the participation process and asked to keep the public in North St. Paul updated about opportunities for involvement and input. This could generate greater awareness of opportunities in the community, particularly for low literacy and non-English speaking populations and even the visually impaired, potentially increasing participation. It would be beneficial to include updates and meeting dates in free local newspapers and ethnic-specific newspapers for people who may not have access to television or those who are hearing impaired.

Community Calendars

Many local websites, magazines, and newspapers include community event calendars. We will solicit each source to ensure that the public meetings are advertised early and consistently. As mentioned previously, these calendars could be available at religious institutions and other places commonly

visited by the underrepresented groups in North St. Paul. Beyond the provision of opportunities for engagement, we will share regular updates throughout the planning process on our own webpage designed specifically for this process.

Community Events

Another way to share information about upcoming and ongoing participation opportunities is to set up an information booth and/or pass out flyers at existing community events including but not limited to school fairs, cultural celebrations, and other festivals. These events will be identified with help from city staff, trusted advocates, community organizations, and other various stakeholders.

2.2 Best Practices for Data Collection

The essence of public participation is a two-way communication and interaction between the City and the residents. It is important to involve participants as much as possible. Since each target group has different needs, it is important to divide participants into multiple interest groups. In order to collect data from different interest groups, there are some techniques listed by characteristics:

Limited Time & Access	Language Barrier	Educational Attainment	Youth
<p>Accommodations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Childcare • Food & beverage • Reimbursement for travel <p>Incentives for Participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery/gas card <p>Location of events or activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit travel distance • In-Home Engagement • Venues with community significance 	<p>Use of Visual Aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping exercises • Model making • Voting boards <p>Provide Translator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit bi-lingual community member <p>Translate materials in other languages</p>	<p>Use of Technical Language</p> <p>Small Group Engagement Meeting</p>	<p>Social Media</p> <p>Host open houses and small group engagement meetings in high schools</p> <p>Partner with trusted youth advocates</p> <p>Partner with YWCA, YMCA, and youth service organizations</p>

2.3 Best Practices for Meetings

Welcoming and Casual Atmosphere

First and foremost, our goal is to create a welcoming and casual atmosphere for anyone who may attend the meeting. This is especially important because there will be many people present that may have not previously participated in a city sponsored planning process. There will be volunteers or staff members wearing brightly colored shirts with nametags designated as door greeters, sign-in attendants, and floaters. It is important that the sign-in sheets are attended so that volunteers can write down names, addresses, and contact information for residents with low literacy and limited English proficiency. There will be an attempt to place various identifiable community leaders from underrepresented groups in the aforementioned roles in order to ensure that attendees feel included and at ease throughout each meeting.

Provision of Food

Food will be provided at each meeting because it incentivizes attendance, especially for single parents and low-income residents working multiple jobs. Serving light refreshments, meals, and coffee can also serve as an icebreaker and invite interaction between underrepresented residents. Rather than supplying generic food from a national chain restaurant, food will be supplied from local restaurants in North St. Paul representing various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. It is also important to make sure that food is culturally appropriate to different underrepresented groups. This will convey that we are invested in the community and have been thoughtful in planning the events.

Child Care and Activities

A major obstacle for attending public meetings is the lack of adequate child-care for parents. One of the best ways to remove this barrier is to design a kid-friendly meeting. A child's creativity could even contribute to the meeting through community mapping. Children and youth themselves are often underrepresented in community

visioning processes as it is. There are many valuable perspectives that children can offer, and mapping and building block activities are simple ways to harness these ideas. If the meeting is not appropriate for involving children, some type of child-care will still be provided to increase meeting attendance and allow parents, grandparents, and other caregivers the opportunity to focus their undivided attention to their participation.

Transportation Assistance

Lack of transportation is a significant barrier for many underrepresented groups to attending public meetings. In addition to advertising the meeting times, public transit directions will be provided for those who rely on public transit. Carpools will also be arranged for those who do not have access to a vehicle, public transit, or who may require special transportation needs, such as those who have disability-related mobility challenges. Another option to be considered after identifying underrepresented groups is to select a meeting location within walking distance of those who face the greatest transportation barriers, such as meeting at a senior care facility.

Incentives

A simple incentive mechanism is the use of raffle tickets for much needed goods and services. As people sign-in upon entry to the meeting, they will automatically be entered into a raffle. The prizes will include necessity gifts but are not limited to grocery store gift cards, gas cards, and transit cards.

Information Delivery

Part of creating a welcoming and casual environment for a meeting is avoiding the use of jargon and technical speech. Once the underrepresented groups are identified in Task 1, we will know whether there are any language

barriers present. It may be necessary to have a translator from the community present for the meeting, even if it is only for a few participants. People will not feel included if they feel confused or are unable to understand the content of the meeting. In addition to addressing language barriers, it may be necessary to provide sign language interpreters and/or information transcribed in braille for the visually impaired.

Activities

There are a number of hands-on activities that encourage creativity and meaningful interactions between participants. James Rojas, who is an urban planner and community activist focusing on Latino Urbanism, popularized model-building workshops in which participants are given a host of everyday objects to represent physical changes within their city. Interactive maps will be available that participants can manipulate with stickers, post-it notes, or writing implements to provide another method of feedback and input.

Conflict Mitigation

In a room full of people with differing lifestyles, opinions, and backgrounds, conflict will certainly arise. However, there are techniques to mitigate conflict and create positive results. The following are successful methods to minimize conflict:

- Acknowledge the concerns of the other side
- Accept responsibility, admit mistakes, and share power
- Act in a trustworthy fashion at all times
- Focus on building long-term relationships (Susskind & Field, 1996)

A large part of the process is being as transparent as possible with the public and begin building trust with every group in the community.

TASK IDENTIFY

3

KEY MEETINGS

In order to effectively engage new, previously underrepresented participants, it is imperative to increase the accessibility of meetings. We will hold a total of four key meetings. There will be three opportunities to attend the initial meeting, two opportunities to attend the second and third meetings, and we will conclude with a single final meeting. The meetings are organized in this manner to engage a large number of people, while simultaneously narrowing focus and direction. Once the underrepresented groups are identified in Task 1, the provided chart within the current task (matrix, holidays – think of way to say this) will aid in determining the most accessible dates and times for the meetings. To further increase the accessibility of the first two meetings, the location will also change to accommodate residents of different areas.

DELIVERABLES:

- A meeting sequence that will accommodate a majority of participant's schedules
- Sample agendas for each of the key meetings
- Meetings that will engage a large number of people, while simultaneously narrowing focus and direction

3.1 Phase 1 Meetings

The first meeting will be held on three occasions at various locations in order to engage previously unreachable residents. The goal of the first meeting will be to begin discussions about North St. Paul and gain community input. The identified issues and areas of focus provided from this meeting will guide us in determining the content for the following meetings.

Sample Itinerary:

- Welcome and Introductions with snacks and refreshments
- Icebreaker
- Overview scope and goals of participation process
- Brainstorming activities
- Small group discussions
- Representative from each group shares progress
- Wrap-up

3.2 Phase 2 Meetings

Participants will have two opportunities to attend the second meeting, at two different locations. We will analyze the results of the initial meetings and identify common themes from the input we gathered. The overarching goal of the meetings will be to build both consensus and capacity, and to identify specific goals and issues to focus on for the community-wide vision.

Sample Itinerary:

- Welcome and Introductions with snacks and refreshments
- Icebreaker
- Review of initial progress and ideas
- Ranking of issues
- Narrowing the scope activity – photo response/mapping exercise
- Wrap-up

Table 1 - 2014 Holidays to Accommodate

2014 Holidays			
Name of Holiday	Religion/U.S. Holiday	Date	Days of the Week
New Year's Day	U.S. Holiday	1/1/2014	Wednesday
Christmas (Orthodox)	Orthodox Christian	1/7/2014	Wednesday
Maulid an-Nabi *	Islamic	1/13/2014	Monday
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Observed)	U.S. Holiday	1/20/2014	Monday
President's Day (Observed)	U.S. Holiday	2/17/2014	Monday
Maha Shivaratri	Hindu	2/28/2014	Friday
Beginning of Lent (Clean Monday)	Orthodox Christian	3/3/2014	Monday
Ash Wednesday	Christian	3/5/2014	Wednesday
Purim *	Jewish	3/16/2014	Sunday
Holi	Hindu	3/17/14 - 3/18/14	Monday - Tuesday
Ramanavami	Hindu	4/8/2014	Tuesday
Passover *	Jewish	4/15/14 - 4/22/14	Tuesday - Tuesday
Good Friday	Christian & Orthodox Christian	4/18/2014	Friday
Easter	Christian & Orthodox Christian	4/20/2014	Sunday
Memorial Day (Observed)	U.S. Holiday	5/26/2014	Monday
Shavouth *	Jewish	6/4/2014	Wednesday
Ramadan (Beginning) *	Islamic	6/28/2014	Saturday
Independence Day (Observed)	U.S. Holiday	7/4/2014	Friday
Laylat al-Qadr *	Islamic	7/23/2014	Wednesday
Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan) *	Islamic	7/28/2014	Monday
Janmashtami	Hindu	8/17/2014	Sunday
Labor Day	U.S. Holiday	9/1/2014	Monday
Rosh Hashanah *	Jewish	9/25/14 - 9/26/14	Thursday - Friday
Navaratri / Dassehra	Hindu	9/25/14 - 10/3/14	Thursday - Friday
Yom Kippur *	Jewish	10/4/2014	Saturday
Eid al-Adha *	Islamic	10/4/2014	Saturday
Sukkoth *	Jewish	10/9/2014	Thursday
Columbus Day (Observed)	U.S. Holiday	10/13/2014	Monday
Sh'mini Atzeret *	Jewish	10/16/2014	Thursday
Simchat Torah *	Jewish	10/17/2014	Friday
Diwali	Hindu	10/23/2014	Thursday
Muharram (Al Hijrah - New Year) *	Islamic	10/25/2014	Saturday
Veteran's Day	U.S. Holiday	11/11/2014	Tuesday
Thanksgiving Day	U.S. Holiday	11/27/2014	Thursday
Hanukkah (1st Day) *	Jewish	12/17/14 - 12/24/14	Wednesday - Wednesday
Christmas Day	Christian/U.S. Holiday	12/25/2014	Thursday

* All Jewish and Islamic holidays listed above begin at sundown on the previous day

All meetings shall accommodate for federal and religious holidays. In some instances holidays are opportunities for engagement.

Source: <https://diversity.umn.edu/eoaa/religiouscalendar20132014> & <https://diversity.umn.edu/eoaa/religiouscalendar20142015>

3.3 Phase 3 Meetings

Participants will also have two opportunities to attend the third meeting, at two different locations. We will present our final visions, objectives, and goals as prescribed by the previous meetings, and fine-tune the ideas for our preliminary draft.

Sample Itinerary:

- Welcome and Introductions with snacks and refreshments
- Icebreaker
- Presentation of accumulated visions, objectives, and goals
- Feedback session
- Wrap-up

3.4 Phase 4 Meeting

After the third meetings, we will compile a preliminary draft of the community wide vision. We will then hold a final meeting in which we will gather feedback for the final document revisions to ensure the community's voice is represented.

Sample Itinerary:

- Welcome and Introductions with snacks and refreshments
- Icebreaker
- Presentation of final visions, objectives, and goals
- Surveys regarding the plan will be completed to gather final feedback
- Wrap-up

Table 2 - Potential Meeting Locations

Religious Centers
River of God Church 2490 7th Ave E, St Paul, MN 651.770.7777
North Presbyterian Church 2675 Hwy 36 E, St Paul, MN 651.777.4044
St Peter's Catholic Church 2600 Margaret St N, North St Paul, MN 651.777.8304
North Haven Church 2240 15th Ave E, St Paul, MN 651.777.1384
House of Prayer Lutheran Church 6039 40th St N, St Paul, MN 651.777.1607
Schools
North St Paul Public Schools 2520 12th Ave E, St Paul, MN 651.748.7622
Cowern Elementary School 2131, North Margaret Street, MN 651.748.6800
North High School 2416 11th Ave E, North St Paul, MN 651.748.6000
Hill.Murray School 2625 Larpenteur Ave E, Maplewood, MN 651.777.1376
Transitions Program Special Education 2586 7th Ave E, North St Paul, MN 651.621.1900
District Education Center 2520 12th Ave E, North St Paul, MN 651.748.7622
Community Facilities
North Saint Paul Community Center 2290 1st St N, St Paul, MN 651.770.4471
Maplewood Care Center 1900 Sherren Ave E, Maplewood, MN 651.770.1365
Maplewood Community Center 2100 White Bear Ave, Maplewood, MN 651.249.2100
Community Center 2300 N St Paul Dr, St Paul, MN 651.770.4471
Community of Christ 2475 Skillman Ave E, St Paul, MN 651.770.5583
Century Trails 1730 Monastery Way, Maplewood, MN 651.290.6228
White Bear Area YMCA 2100 Orchard Ln, White Bear Lake, MN 651.777.8103

TASK 4 ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

The key meetings will begin after winter, in April, to avoid cancellations or inconvenience due to inclement weather. While the exact dates and times cannot be chosen until an evaluation of the identified underrepresented groups is completed, we have outlined a sample itinerary for the meetings.

4.1 Survey Community for Availability

The key meeting dates indicated on the right hand side are suggested times for engagement. However, in order to ensure that these pre-planned meeting dates can actually accommodate the target populations, we will conduct an availability survey and adjust the schedule accordingly. This survey will also help us understand the cultural and religious practices associated with certain groups.

4.2 Reference Holiday & Activity Calendar

Once the availability survey is completed, we will cross reference the results with the Holiday Calendar on page 22. This will allow us to accommodate for populations who celebrate certain holidays and events.

4.3 Conduct Engagement Meetings & Data Analysis

Each meeting will be preceded by a meeting notification to all targeted participants using the method identified in Task 2.1 and proceeded by data analysis discussed in Task 6.1.

KEY MEETINGS:

April 2014

Phase 1 Meetings – Tuesday morning, Thursday evening, Saturday afternoon

May 2014

Phase 2 Meetings – Tuesday morning, Thursday evening

Phase 3 Meetings – Tuesday morning, Thursday evening

June 2014

Phase 4 Meetings – Thursday evening

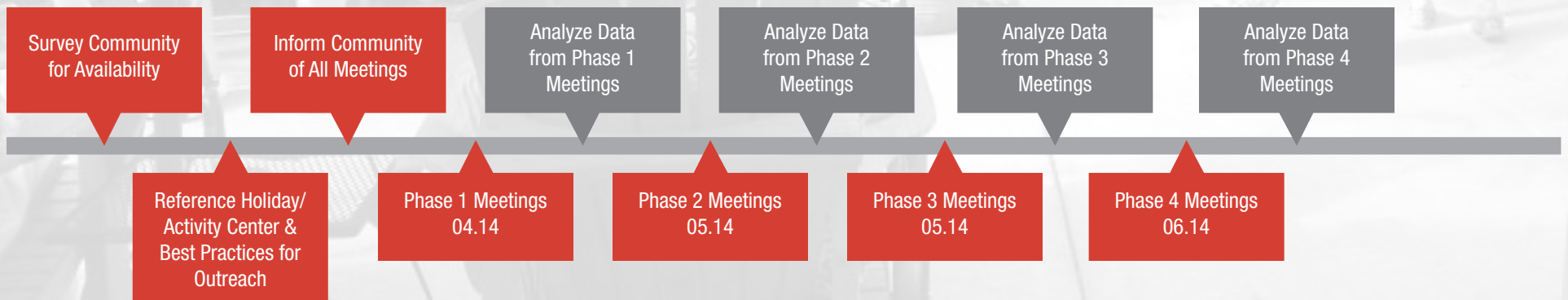
NOTE:

Meetings are proposed on Tuesday mornings and Thursday evenings due to the following factors:

1. Federal holidays often take place on Mondays.
2. Religious holidays and family time often take place on Wednesdays & Fridays.

DELIVERABLES:

- An informed participation process that will cater to historically underrepresented groups in North St. Paul



TASK

5

DEVELOP A BUDGET & LOGISTIC PLAN

The key meetings will begin after winter, in April, to avoid cancellations or inconvenience due to inclement weather. While the exact dates and times cannot be chosen until an evaluation of the identified underrepresented groups is completed, we have chosen specific weeks in which the meetings will take place.

5.1 PHASE 1 MEETINGS

Goals:

- Begin discussions about North St. Paul
- Gain community input

Logistics:

- Meeting location
- Venue
Ex: Church, Community center
- Facilitators/staff/volunteers
- Brainstorming activities

Budget (Typical for all phases):

- Refreshments
Ex: Food from local restaurants, soft drinks/coffee/tea
- Supplies
- Rent fee
- Equipment
- Advertisement
Ex: Mass mailings, social media, newsletters

5.2 PHASE 2 MEETINGS

Goals:

- Build both consensus and capacity
- Identify specific goals and issues

Logistics:

- Meeting location
- Venue
Ex: Church, Community center
- Facilitators/staff/volunteers
- Scope activity
Ex: Photo response, mapping exercise
- Ranking Goals
- Review of initial progress and ideas

5.3 PHASE 3 MEETINGS

Goals:

- Present our final visions, objectives, and goals
- Fine-tune the ideas for preliminary draft

Logistics:

- Meeting location
- Venue
Ex: Church, Community center
- Facilitators/staff/volunteers
- Presentation of accumulated visions, objectives, and goals
- Feedback sessions

5.4 PHASE 4 MEETING

Goals:

- Compile preliminary draft
- Gather feedback

Logistics:

- Meeting location
- Venue
Ex: Church, Community center
- Facilitators/staff/volunteers
- Presentation of final visions, objectives, and goals
- Final feedback session

DELIVERABLES

- An allocated budget for each meeting
- The determination of a meeting place
- A logistics work plan for each meeting

TASK

6

DEVELOP AN EVALUATION PLAN

6.1 Evaluation of the Participation Process

Evaluation is essential to several aspects of the participation process. We must evaluate which best practices are efficient for each identity group. As previously mentioned, there are potential barriers to be considered, such as: language barriers, access to childcare, educational attainment, and income level. Local community organizations and religious institutions provide connections to residents who may face these barriers and can help us evaluate how to best engage certain demographics.

There are numerous ways in which we will be documenting the outcomes of the participation efforts. We will provide sign-in sheets at each meeting to track attendance and identify whether participants came to all three meetings. Comment cards will be made available at each meeting and there will also be opportunities to post comments in an online forum. Throughout the participation process, surveys will be available at meetings, in newsletters, and online to capture participant's opinions. We will organize the qualitative data such as written and verbal feedback; according to content to find common themes. There will be no way to evaluate which participatory methods are most effective until they are conducted in the meetings because of the qualitative nature of participation, especially regarding underrepresented groups.

6.2 Evaluation After Adoption of Community-Wide Vision Plan

After the adoption of the final plan, we will evaluate how the participation process contributed to the plan. An easy way to evaluate whether the process was successful, is to follow-up on proposed goals and outcomes and determine how many are directly related to the involvement of underrepresented participants in the process. Furthermore, were any or all of these goals or outcomes achieved? If so, were they achieved in accordance with the designated timeline? The answers to these questions are paramount in designing a framework for long-term engagement.

DELIVERABLES:

- Techniques for tracking progress throughout the planning process
- Evaluation of the qualitative data gathered from the four key meetings
- Framework that will help define methods for long-term engagement

TASK SHORT & LONG-TERM 7 ENGAGEMENT OF UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

Engaging underrepresented residents in the North St. Paul community wide visioning process presents an indispensable opportunity to foster long-term, meaningful engagement in the City. While this particular visioning process is short-term, the results are crucial for creating a cohesive North St. Paul.

7.1 Building Trust

One of the first steps to building trust with historically underrepresented participants is to create a genuine and sincere meeting format. Many people may have become underrepresented over time because they felt ignored in the past, and became apathetic to the planning process. Therefore, we should strive to make tangible changes based upon the public consensus according to different timelines. People are more likely to participate in the future if they can see the impact their participation has on the City.

7.2 Avoiding Engagement Fatigue

One of the greatest barriers to implementing long-term, inclusive engagement is the potential for engagement fatigue. Once the final objectives are determined, there must be extensive efforts to complete each goal, thus illustrating that the City

values the input of its residents. Furthermore, some of the goals should be short-term and physical, in order for people to see that the City will follow through and build trust for future processes.

7.3 Feedback Mechanisms

There should be several mechanisms in place to enable continual feedback to participants. To ensure long-term engagement, participants must see tangible results that their input is being taken seriously by the City. After the participation process, we will have the ability to determine which best practices are most suitable in relation to the populations we are trying to reach. We will continue with the most successful practices to maintain engagement. For instance, if we find that a certain type of communication (through religious institutions, newsletters, email, etc.) is a best practice pertaining to a certain group, we will pursue those mediums to give and receive feedback from participants.

THE EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY MODEL:

“Dialogue to action” models, such as Everyday Democracy Study Circles are useful in identifying neighborhood assets, strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement on an ongoing basis.

The following is an example of how Study Circles could function in North St. Paul:

- For each neighborhood, a small focus group with 6 to 10 people will be formed
- Over a five-week period, each group identifies three areas of concern they would like to work on
- After five weeks of discussions, an action forum will be held in which each group shares their experiences and presents ideas
- Each participant votes on their favorite ideas
- The top three project ideas are identified and residents are invited to begin creating plans to address each issue
- The process will be repeated a year later

The aim of creating these small groups is to give residents a chance to work on issues that are of high importance to them in the present, so that they can eventually address larger issues facing the community. Although there will be overarching goals for the Study Circles, the program is driven by the participants themselves. Not only is this an effective participation process for the creation of plans in general, but it can also be used as a tool to encourage ongoing participation.

Deliverables:

- The development of a foundation of trust with previously underrepresented residents
- Strategies for avoiding engagement fatigue
- A network of feedback mechanisms within the City
- Long-term, meaningful engagement of underrepresented residents

The final overarching deliverable of the participation process will identify underrepresented groups in North St. Paul. Once this is achieved, we will be able to tailor best practices and engagement techniques to each group to create a unified vision for the City. As the process advances, it will become clear how the results will relate to the final community wide vision plan.

If FoHamTraWu Community Design Center is chosen as a consultant team for engaging underrepresented populations in North St. Paul, we will work diligently to identify these groups and begin building trust between them and the City to create long-term, meaningful engagement. We firmly believe that the toolkit we provided is appropriate for the context of North St. Paul, and aligns with the City's goals for the community-wide visioning process.

FoHamTraWu

Community Design Center

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De Souza Briggs, X. "Doing Democracy Up-Close: Culture, Power, and Communication in Community Building." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 18.1 (1998): 1-13.

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