



Report #5 in the Series:
Moving Communities Forward



Enhancing Transportation: The Effects of Public Involvement in Planning and Design Processes



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
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Report #5 in the Series: Moving Communities Forward

Final Report

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Preface

Well-designed transportation projects demonstrate the potential to shape a community in ways that go far beyond the project's original purposes. Anecdotal evidence and advocacy exist on behalf of the benefits of well-designed transportation projects on communities, yet there is little organized quantifiable or qualitative data, nor is there a comprehensive guide for communities to maximize or integrate the diverse benefits that well-designed transportation projects can bring.

Recognizing this lack of data about the role of design in transportation, Congress authorized a study in Section 1925 of the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) to achieve two goals: (1) begin to measure how well-designed transportation projects can bring multiple enhancements to communities in terms of economic development, health and the environment, visual identity and design, public participation, and public safety; and (2) provide communities, designers, transportation officials, and policymakers a set of principles and practices to adapt to their unique situations and needs.

The *Moving Communities Forward* research team employed a case study-based approach, analyzing nearly 30 transportation projects that represent a broad spectrum of regions, demographics, and project types. The research team identified key principles and practices that designers and others can use—in the context of their unique situation and environment—to realize multiple enhancements to their communities.

Funding for the study was derived from a grant to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), authorized by Congress in SAFETEA-LU. In 2006, the AIA selected the Center for Transportation Studies (CTS) at the University of Minnesota to conduct the pioneering research study.

To address the interdisciplinary issues raised by the study, CTS assembled a research team drawn from multiple fields. Research was allocated to five research projects; a sixth project synthesized the study's key findings into a single document highlighting major themes and recommendations:

1. Promoting Economic Development
2. Improving Health and the Environment
3. Designing Great Places
4. Fostering Civic Participation
5. Making Communities Safer
6. Study Synthesis

Results of this research are available in a series of reports on the *Moving Communities Forward* Web site: www.movingcommunitiesforward.org. The site also includes a summary report submitted by the FHWA to Congress in September 2007. The Web site is part of a coordinated outreach effort designed to share the research findings and recommended practices with transportation and design professionals, policymakers, and the public.

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ABOUT THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

The American Institute of Architects (www.aia.org) is the voice of the architectural profession and the resource for its members in service to society. As AIA members, more than 80,000 licensed architects in over 300 state and local chapters express their commitment to excellence in design and livability in our nation's buildings and communities. Members adhere to a code of ethics and professional conduct that assures the client, the public, and colleagues of an AIA-member architect's dedication to the highest standards in professional practice.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

The Center for Transportation Studies' (www.cts.umn.edu) mission is to serve as a catalyst for transportation innovation through research, education, and outreach. CTS works with University of Minnesota faculty in over 25 disciplines to advance knowledge in a variety of transportation-related research areas. In 1997, CTS first became involved with transportation and urban design issues in its leadership of a major interdisciplinary effort, the Transportation and Regional Growth Study, which produced new understandings of the relationship between transportation and growth in the Twin Cities area. CTS has also worked closely with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and local governments in advancing Context Sensitive Design/Solutions practices through the development of training courses and web resources, which have helped Minnesota to be recognized by FHWA and AASHTO as a leading state in applying Context Sensitive Design/Solutions.



Transit oriented redevelopment near the University of Washington's satellite campus in downtown Tacoma.

Credits

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with

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Commuter rail station in Fort Worth, Texas.

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Work on this report in the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota was coordinated by Carissa Schively, project director and principal investigator. She drafted the report, visited five of the sites, conducted interviews for three of the case studies, and took most of the photographs. Research assistance was provided by Meagan Beekman, Cynthia Carlson, and Jenn Reed. Each provided background research related to the case studies, completed a site visit, and conducted interviews for one of the cases. Additional assistance was provided by Jenn Reed related to the literature review and report layout.

Thanks also to Ann Forsyth, lead on the visual assessment portion of the larger study, for collaborative activities throughout the project. Ann also provided photos for the Emerson Park case which are included throughout the document. In addition, we would like to thank Katie Thering at the Metropolitan Design Center for her contribution of the design template for the final report.



Narrow street in Philadelphia's Old City neighborhood.



Waterfront pedestrian amenities and public art in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Executive Summary

Overview

This research examines the nature and effects of inclusive and effective participation in the planning and design of transportation facilities. While there is general agreement about the importance of participation in planning processes (Burby 2003, Bickerstaff and Walker 2001, Innes 1992), including transportation planning, there is little consistency in its application or its effects. This research attempts to develop a common base of information to guide the development and organization of planning and design processes for transportation facilities and provide a consistent methodology for evaluating process outcomes. The study outcomes include best practices for public involvement in planning and design processes for transportation projects.

The study places a particular focus on the criteria for effective participation, techniques used to engage the public, as well as the implications of public involvement on type, location, design, and program for transportation projects. In addition, the research identifies broader community benefits associated with effective participation processes. The study includes an additional focus on understanding the role of professional design experts in the participatory processes. Six transportation project case studies are examined, pointing to a number of lessons to be considered by designers, agencies, and the public.

Key Findings

The transportation projects considered in this study provide important insights into what is required for effective participation to be achieved in transportation planning and design processes. These criteria, further discussed in the practices section below, highlight important considerations for those planning and design processes:

- Using multiple methods of participation throughout the transportation planning and design process;
- Identifying a local champion or advocate to lead the project vision and organize participants;
- Ensuring a clear sense of the desired outcome, whether informed by previous planning efforts or current participants;

2 | Enhancing Transportation

- Providing political leadership to initiate institutional changes and address public opposition;
- Selectively using professional design experts to supplement local knowledge; and
- Employing visualization techniques to educate participants and instill a vision for the future.

Rather than functioning as prescription, the practices or criteria identified here might be considered as components in a framework that can help local decision-makers assess the context in which the transportation project will be developed.

At the same time, the cases examined in this study illustrate the range of benefits that can be achieved by engaging the public in planning and design processes for transportation projects. These benefits are captured by members of the public as they gain knowledge and expertise that they can take away from the participation process. Benefits are also gained by the broader community as it gains credibility and pride in its accomplishments. For example, with its innovative approach to traffic calming, West Palm Beach became a national model for streetscape design and pedestrian planning. The Emerson Park neighborhood gained a reputation for being organized and capable, overcoming the limitations of the East St. Louis political system and rallying a struggling neighborhood around a common goal of transportation access and redevelopment. In Arlington County, the Clarendon sector planning process drew together the varying perspectives from the community's vast civic infrastructure in a process. This participatory planning effort facilitated a community conversation about what is unique about the community and refine its evolving conception of what it means to be an "urban village."

The benefits of public involvement also are reflected in the design of the transportation projects. In each of the cases examined in the study, the participants influenced the design outcomes. While in some cases the initial project design or the original community vision was altered, in each case, the process of engaging around the design and planning of a transportation project brought the community together. One of the most compelling findings in these cases is how in each project, those involved challenged conventional approaches to transportation planning and design. To allow this challenge to be successful, it was essential that public involvement, and in some cases community organizing, occur. In the Barracks Row project, community involvement led to a streetscape design that revitalized a commercial corridor that meets that meets the needs and reflects the diverse perspectives of those in surrounding neighborhoods. For the Bridgeport Way project, public involvement resulted in scaling back an initial proposed

design, but ultimately brought the community together in agreement on important safety and amenity features on University Way's "Main Street." In West Palm Beach, early public interest in neighborhood traffic calming helped to institutionalize alternative street design approaches in the City, which continued forward in larger projects on state highways, and in downtown and major redevelopment projects. With the Clarendon station area planning process, a sophisticated and highly engaged public helped the City move forward in refining its vision for development and redevelopment, pointing to specific criteria for both public spaces and private development in the station area. In the Emerson Park neighborhood, extensive public involvement led to the relocation of a proposed transit station and construction of new housing, setting the stage for ongoing redevelopment in a struggling neighborhood. Finally, in the Fruitvale case, a neighborhood organization tapped into one of its most important assets, the community, to achieve an alternative approach to transit oriented development (TOD) that has informed transit agencies, designers, planners, and developers across the nation.

Research Approach and Measures

This study is informed by previous research on the criteria and outcomes of effective participation in planning and design processes. The literature points to criteria related to the organization and structure of the participatory aspects of the planning and design process, the timing of participation efforts, the overall level of participation, participation methods (e.g. steering committee, public hearing), types of participants, and use of communication efforts. Some of the criteria for effective participation identified include:

- Use visualization methods (Al-Kodmany 2000);
- Include of a wide variety of stakeholders (Lowry et al. 1997);
- Support participants with information and access to expert knowledge (Innes and Booher 2004);
- Promote consensus-based decision-making processes when appropriate (Margerum 1999);
- Create an open environment that is safe for ongoing deliberation (Forester 1998); and
- Provide multiple methods of participation (IAP2), including informal methods (Laurian 2004).

In addition, the outcomes of participation, discussed widely in the literature, also were addressed. Outcomes relate to decision-making processes, organizations, individuals, communities, and

projects. Those outcomes of greatest interest in this study were the physical design of the transportation project and associated development and the broader social impacts at the individual and community level. The outcomes of participation identified in previous research include:

- Sensitive design solutions (Crewe 2001);
- Agreement on a shared definition of the problem (Lowry et al. 1997);
- Builds framework and organizing capacity to facilitate ongoing solutions (Duram and Brown 1999, Tuler and Webler 1999);
- Support for implementation (Burby 2003);
- Shared knowledge (Innes and Booher 1999, Innes and Gruber 2005).

The criteria and outcomes described above were evaluated using a case study method, in which public involvement in the planning and design processes for six transportation projects was documented. The measures of effective participation were operationalized in a series of questions delivered through interviews of key participants in each of the cases. Interviewees included both those managing the participation processes and participants themselves, with an intent to capture the broadest range of perspectives on the conduct and outcomes of the planning and design process. Elected and appointed officials, representatives from relevant agencies and non-governmental organizations, and the general public were among those interviewed. Professional architects, planners, landscape architects, and engineers also were included in the study.

Cases

The criteria and outcomes of effective participation were evaluated in the context of six transportation project cases. These cases were selected from two contexts: TOD and context sensitive solutions (CSS). The cases were selected to achieve a wide variation in terms of geographic location, neighborhood context, site conditions, and issues (e.g. transportation, planning, and design). For the CSS cases, there was an intentional focus on identifying cases at a variety of scales. For the TOD cases, there was intention to identify cases that had varied participants and neighborhood characteristics.

TOD Cases

Emerson Park Station Area, East Saint Louis, IL

The Emerson Park station area is part of the St. Louis region's MetroLink rail system. The station was developed in 2001, with significant intervention by the Emerson Park Development



Corporation (EPDC) following a rail line extension announced in 1994. This non-profit organization had been active in the Emerson Park neighborhood since the 1970s and worked extensively with the neighborhood prior to the extension to develop a community plan and vision. The neighborhood of Emerson Park has very low levels of employment, income, housing, values, and transit access. The initially proposed rail alignment was inaccessible for neighborhood residents, separated by a major highway. The EPDC played a crucial role in lobbying MetroLink, St. Clair County Transit Authority, and the City of East St. Louis to relocate the proposed station. To support this lobbying effort and preliminary station area planning, the EPDC organized extensive community participation, worked with planning and design students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and staged protests. They also coordinated with an experienced affordable housing developer to facilitate the station area plan and nearby TOD which included 147 units of mixed-income housing, the first to be built in the neighborhood



Top: New mixed income housing has been developed adjacent to the transit station. Bottom: The Emerson Park transit station provides an important transportation link for neighborhood residents. (Photo source: Ann Forsyth)

6 | Enhancing Transportation



Left: A new pedestrian oriented commercial development in the Clarendon station area is located adjacent to new high density residential. Right: Recent planning efforts and public investment has focused on the design of public spaces in the Clarendon station area.

in over 30 years. As a direct result of this participation effort the EPDC has received a great deal of notoriety and has been able to leverage this into additional grant money and funding for the neighborhood, build a community charter school, and provide the neighborhood of Emerson Park with much needed infrastructure improvements and social capital.

Clarendon Station Area, Arlington County, VA

The Clarendon station area in Arlington County is part of the Washington, DC region's Metrorail system. The station is located on the orange line in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, in a largely white, highly educated, and relatively high income area. The area is surrounded by a number of older single-family neighborhoods, but the area has seen an increase in higher density development. The station area has evolved since the rail system opened in the 1970s, with an increasing number of businesses and residential units in recent years. The research focused on the most recent planning process for the area, the 2006 Clarendon Sector Plan Update. Participation in this process was extensive, reflective of the mature governmental structure and institutionalization of a wide range of county advisory committees, including the Clarendon Sector Plan Task Force. Key issues addressed in the participatory process include increased residential densities, parking, historic preservation, streetscape design, traffic circulation, and multi-modal facilities.

Fruitvale Transit Village, Oakland, CA

The Fruitvale Transit Village project is located at the Fruitvale station on the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) rail system in Oakland. Originally proposed as a parking garage near an existing BART station in 1991, through the work of a neighborhood-based non-profit community development corporation the project became one of the earliest examples of TOD in the U.S. The planning and design of the transit village, including a mix of housing, commercial, office, and service uses, was led by the Unity Council which has worked in the largely Latino Fruitvale neighborhood for over 40 years. The Unity Council's strong connection to neighborhood residents and businesses was essential in organizing the public around the proposed alternative to the parking garage. To facilitate development of the transit village, the Unity Council established the Fruitvale Development Corporation, which gained control of the site in 1998. Through extensive



Left: Service uses, including La Clinica de la Raza, provide anchors for the project and address the needs of local residents. Other service uses include a day care, senior center, library, and office for the Unity Council. Right: The Fruitvale Transit Village features a pedestrian oriented environment with a central paseo connecting the transit station to the adjacent neighborhood. The paseo serves as a gathering space for community events and an access route between the neighborhood and the Fruitvale BART station.



Angled parking in a portion of the six-block Barracks Row Main Street organization to accommodate more parking for businesses. It also provides a buffer between pedestrians on cars traveling on Eighth Street SE. Banners advertise the Shakespeare Festival, an important cultural activity in the neighborhood, that helped spur redevelopment.

collaboration with BART, the City of Oakland, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and several community service providers including La Clinica de la Raza and the Oakland Public Library, the Fruitvale Development Corporation was able to secure the resources and institutions necessary to move the project forward. The final project represents the design character of the neighborhood and has stimulated further revitalization in the Fruitvale neighborhood.

CSS Cases

Barracks Row, Washington, DC

The Barracks Row project is a six block streetscape redesign project on Eighth Street SE in the Capitol Hill Historic District in Washington, DC. The street includes a number of historic buildings, a mix of businesses, and the U.S. Marine Barracks. The project area is one block from the Eastern Market station on the Washington DC Metrorail system. The surrounding neighborhood includes a large number of residential units of varying values, with 57 percent white and 38 percent black population. The streetscape redesign was funded in part by the



The *Tour of Duty: Barracks Row Heritage Trail* runs through the project area. Signs along the route document the history of the Barracks Row area and contribute to the character of the streetscape. The trail is a project of Cultural Tourism DC and was completed in coordination with Barracks Row Main Streets and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

DC Main Streets program and led by the Barracks Row Main Street Association and DC Department of Transportation. Participation occurred throughout the planning and design process, from early visioning efforts through design implementation and construction. The collaboration between agency staff, private consultants, Marines and Navy staff, business owners, and public participants produced a streetscape redesign that accommodates the needs of pedestrians and vehicles and has revitalized the Barracks Row area.

Bridgeport Way, University Place, WA

This 1.5 mile highway redesign project, located in a suburban community in the Seattle-Tacoma region, involved a roadway improvement from a five-lane rural section



Multi-modal improvements were added throughout the Bridgeport Way corridor in University Place, Washington.

highway to a four-lane divided highway. Participation efforts were led by the newly incorporated City of University Place. The City also hired nationally recognized design consultants, focused on walkability and streetscape design, to introduce alternative street design concepts including roundabouts, landscaping, and multi-modal considerations. The consultants used numerous visualization techniques to illustrate alternative roadway designs. The ultimate design evolved from an initial proposal as a result of public and business concerns about the four proposed



On Bridgeport Way, two mid-block crossings are provided in high traffic areas near an existing commercial area and a planned town center in University Place.

roundabouts, business access, and right-of-way acquisition. Extensive participation occurred through charrettes, public and stakeholders meetings. A compromise design removed the roundabouts and adjusted the alignment of intersections to allow for U-turns for business access, but retained extensive use of landscaping, central medians, two mid-block crossings, and pedestrian and bicycle enhancements.



Citywide Traffic Calming, West Palm Beach, FL

Faced with high crime rates and a loss of residents to adjacent suburbs, the City of West Palm Beach undertook traffic calming efforts throughout the city. Led by an ambitious mayor who hired a traffic calming expert to lead the City's Transportation Planning Division, the City government implemented various traffic calming efforts throughout the city's neighborhoods, downtown, and major arterials. Participation varied by context, but a significant focus was placed on working with neighborhoods that requested traffic calming to address issues of high speeds, cut-through traffic, and safety. Participation in these projects often included City



Top: A number of neighborhood traffic calming treatments were implemented throughout the city of West Palm Beach in response to community requests to deal with cut-through and slow down vehicles. Bottom: Downtown traffic calming efforts in West Palm Beach included paved intersections, landscaping, bollards, bumpouts, and improved signage. The streetscape planning and design was facilitated through the Downtown Master Plan process.

staff meeting with residents on the street, examining possible alignments and amenities to be constructed. The City also worked with County and State transportation staff to incorporate traffic calming on major roadways in the city. Traffic calming also was facilitated through the Downtown Master Plan and a development master planning process for the new CityPlace redevelopment project, which involved significant involvement from businesses and property owners.

Practices

Extensive research into the cases identified above, coupled with the results of the interviews with a wide range of participants in each of the projects, points to some important best practices that might be considered by designers, planners, engineers, and others involved in transportation project planning. These best practices encompass many of the criteria and outcomes of effective participation identified in the early part of the study. The best practices provide information about how to organize participation, who should be involved, understanding the purpose of participation, and engaging with design experts. As a means of illustrating the varied applications of the best practices in the transportation cases studied, key highlights from the case details are provided.

Multiple Methods of Participation

Each of the cases considered in the study used a range of different types of participation techniques. These techniques were employed at various points during the planning and design process. In one case, Barracks Row, participation efforts even continued throughout the construction process with meetings of stakeholders occurring bi-weekly in the corridor. In addition to traditional public meetings or hearings, varied participation techniques were used to reach diverse interests at different points during the participation process. For example, in the Emerson Park neighborhood, groups conducted “knock and talks” to engage participants around the topic of relocating the transit station location and its potential effects on the community. In the planning and design process for Bridgeport Way, the City of University Place worked with consultants on a design charrette for the roadway and involved students from the local high school in the process. For the Fruitvale Transit Village project, the Unity Council did extensive outreach to key organizations in the community, met with individuals and businesses, and even engaged the local gangs in the design process. In Arlington County, the Clarendon Sector Plan Task Force represented a wide range of community interests.

Local Champion

In many of the cases examined in the study, the presence of a local champion, whether an organization or individual, was essential in leading the project forward. These champions maintained interest in the project, organized additional participants, secured funding, addressed political challenges, and coordinated with decision-making authorities. For example, in the Fruitvale Transit Village case, the interviews continually pointed to the Executive Director of the Unity Council at the time as being integral to success. Her history and connections in the community, her political connections in the local and federal government, her ability to work with agencies and service providers to secure funding for the project, and her commitment to achieving an outcome that met the needs of the community were essential to the success of the project. In the City of West Palm Beach, the mayor in the mid-1990s was central in leading the traffic calming effort. Inspired by a presentation on traffic calming that she heard at a conference, she hired the presenter to head the City's newly established Transportation Planning division. She provided political support for City staff to implement a wide range of traffic calming efforts across the community, paying significant attention to requests from neighborhoods desiring traffic calming. The mayor even worked with a U.S. House of Representatives member to lobby Congress to allow Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds to be used for traffic calming.

Clear Sense of the Desired Outcome

A characteristic seen across many of the cases examined in the study was a clear focus on the desired outcomes of the transportation planning and design process. While in general, compromises on small design details often occurred through participatory processes, these projects were often successful because the participants had a clear sense of the most important outcomes that they wanted to see. For example, in the Emerson Park neighborhood, the EPDC's previous community planning efforts helped them recognize the impacts of a light rail extension in the neighborhood. While they compromised on some details related to station design and pedestrian access, the neighborhood held to its position that the station be moved and key neighborhood streets remain open. The Fruitvale Transit Village is a similar case, with the Unity Council working diligently with the community to challenge the proposed parking garage and take over major responsibility for planning and designing the transit village. In doing so, they ensured that the TOD project met the needs of residents, promoted efficient transportation access, provided opportunities for business, and included community service providers (e.g. clinic, senior center, library) in the project.

Political Leadership

In most of the cases examined in the study, political leadership became essential during at least one phase of the planning and design process for the transportation project. Participants worked with relevant political leaders to achieve key project goals or were led in their planning and design vision by elected officials. As previously discussed, in the West Palm Beach and Fruitvale Transit Village cases, the political connections held by project champions helped move the projects forward. In the Bridgeport Way case, the political leadership of the City Council in the face of staunch public opposition provided a test of the newly incorporated City's will to push the standards of roadway design in the community. In the Clarendon Sector Plan process, the Arlington County Board exhibited leadership in a different manner. By delegating significant authority to the Sector Plan Task Force, the Board gave up some of its authority and allowed representatives of the highly engaged community to lead the planning process. Only reluctantly, when consensus could not be reached within the task force, did the Board step in to facilitate completion of the final details of the plan.

Professional Design Expertise

In nearly all of the cases studied, the planning and design processes included the use of professionals with design expertise. These design experts played important roles in engaging the public in planning and design processes and communicating about alternative design outcomes. In the Barracks Row project, landscape architects and traffic consultants built on an early community vision for the streetscape, to produce a project that met the needs of automobiles and pedestrians, as well as the various agencies and organizations involved. In West Palm Beach, the mayor hired a traffic calming expert to lead implementation of alternative street design citywide. In the Fruitvale Transit Village project, an early charrette, which included a number of invited design firms, produced a preliminary design that was refined and implemented by an architecture firm selected from the charrette process. In the Emerson Park project, design expertise was provided to the neighborhood by planning and design students through the University of Illinois' East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP). For the Bridgeport Way project, pedestrian planning consultants, changed the perspectives of staff, elected officials, and the public about roadway design options for the corridor.



Clematis Street View Looking West - 1992



Clematis Street View Looking West - Proposed Illustrative View

In this excerpt from the West Palm Beach Downtown Master Plan, planning and design experts involved in preparing the Downtown Master Plan provided images to illustrate design alternatives for the urban streetscape, providing a more pedestrian friendly environment, extensive landscaping, buffered on-street parking, and human-scaled lighting. (Image source: City of West Palm Beach)

Visualization

The use of visualization in public involvement efforts took many forms in the cases examined in the study, often being utilized by the professional designers engaged in the project. Visualization efforts helped articulate alternative design visions, convince project opponents, and lend



Visualization of proposed enhancements on Bridgeport Way in University Place, WA, was key to allowing participants to understand how existing conditions (as shown in the photo above) could be modified to include the landscaped median and boulevards, multi-modal enhancements, lighting, and roadway alignment. These features are illustrated in the lower photo through computer generated visualization. (Photo source: City of University Place)



credibility to community preferences for transportation project design. For example, visualization efforts that included altered photographs showed design scenarios for the Bridgeport Way project. In addition, the pedestrian planning consultants utilized images from other communities to illustrate design options for the community, including the proposed roundabouts. In the Emerson Park station area planning process, proposed designs for the station and surrounding development provided by the ESLARP students gave the EPDC credibility when it approached the transit agencies about moving the station. In the Clarendon sector planning process, one of the public participants was a key contributor. Using photos of the station area, he altered them to include buildings and other features to illustrate proposed plan content. Because of the extensive implementation of traffic calming throughout the city, in West Palm Beach, visualization efforts often involved visiting alternative street design approaches used in other parts of the city.

Summary

While the best practices identified above provide a number of suggested approaches for achieving effective public involvement in planning and design processes for transportation projects, it is important to remember that there is not a prescription for public involvement that can be applied in every case. Each of the projects examined in this study was incredibly unique. In large measure, what made these projects and their public involvement successful was that those facilitating the processes were cognizant of local conditions. They understood local politics, engaged key stakeholders, brought in design experts to supplement local knowledge, and were creative in tailoring the design solutions to the site and neighborhood context. Without the public's input, including participants who both challenged and supported the projects, the outcomes identified above would not have been the same.