Public Involvement

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Context Sensitive Design is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach, that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.

FHWA CSD Website Homepage
Design Excellence - Standard Practice

- Mobility
- Safety
- Preservation of Community Values
- Enhancement of the Natural Environment
Qualities of Excellence in Design

1. Satisfies the problems & needs as agreed
2. Safe facility for user and community
3. In harmony with the community
4. Efficient and effective use of resources
5. Minimal disruption to the community
6. Adds lasting value to the community
7. Achieves excellence in people’s minds
Characteristics of the CSS Process

1. Establish multi-disciplinary team early
2. Understand the valued resources before designing
3. Involve stakeholders, define problems and needs
4. Use a process that examines multiple alternatives
5. Secure commitment from top officials and leaders
6. Open, continuous communication with stakeholders
7. Tailor public involvement process to the project
8. Use visualization; illustrate project alternatives
What’s Needed?

- Organizational Issues
- Public Involvement
- Creative Design
- Team Building
- Communications
- Technical Skills And confidence to use them
The Value of Communications

- Working within a project team
- Working with consultants
- Working with members of the community
Elements of Communication

• Body language
• Words - What is said
• Tone - How we say it
Listening

- Stop talking.
- Give full attention; wait to prepare response.
- Listen for emotional content.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Focus on the main points.
- Summarize the speaker’s main points in your own words to make sure you heard correctly.
- Make no assumptions.
- Recognize your own feelings, then put them aside.
- React to ideas, not to the person presenting them.
Early Communication

- Minimize the spread of rumors.
- Avoid local leaders from feeling ignored and becoming distrusting.
- Enable citizens to feel that they are part of the project.
- Develop a spirit of cooperation.
• Reaching out
• Working Together
• Avoiding Trouble
“I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion by education.”

Thomas Jefferson
Deal with Perceptions

- Perception is Reality
- See the project through their eyes.
Consensus does not mean that everyone agrees, but that groups and individuals can live with a proposal.
Develop a Public Involvement Plan

- Think strategically about the goals for public involvement
- Use plan to communicate the process, decision points, who makes the decision
- Identify public involvement techniques to use based on the goals identified
- Develop a schedule of planned activities
- Identify staff and budget resources needed to accomplish these activities
- Update as needed
Public Involvement Techniques

- Civic Advisory Committees
- Collaborative Task Forces
- Key Person Interviews
- Briefings
- Public Meetings/Hearings
- Open Forum Hearings/Open Houses
- Charrettes
What are the Problems & Needs?

- Seek input from project team, public officials, Citizen’s Resource Team, others.
- Seek consensus on problems and needs.
Context Sensitive Design

Every Project has a Context
A statement of desired characteristics of a place at a specified future time, often 10 to 20 years. This statement should address transportation goals and may include other community goals related to the transportation corridor as well.

- Include Transportation needs
- Include Community Values or Aspirations
- Include Environmental Values
Consensus does not mean that everyone agrees, but that groups and individuals can live with a proposal.
Implement transportation improvements along historic Philadelphia Pike that will help transform it into a revitalized Claymont with a discernable center. A functional and attractive transportation system will allow people to safely and conveniently walk, bicycle, drive and ride transit to places where people live, work, shop, learn, worship and recreate in a vibrant...
Roundabout at Towson, MD
Towson Business Association
Susie DiLonardo
Mount Rainier, Maryland
Smiths Bridge, DE
Sharpsburg, MD Charrette
Public Involvement Lessons

- Barrier to CSD: Attitudes about public involvement
- Every project should have a public involvement plan; remember this is a scalable concept.
- Consider performance measures for public involvement
  - Stakeholder satisfaction and consensus
  - “Did we do what we said we would?”
  - Completed project as a community asset
CSS is a Win-Win Process

“I became a team player because I was part of the team”

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