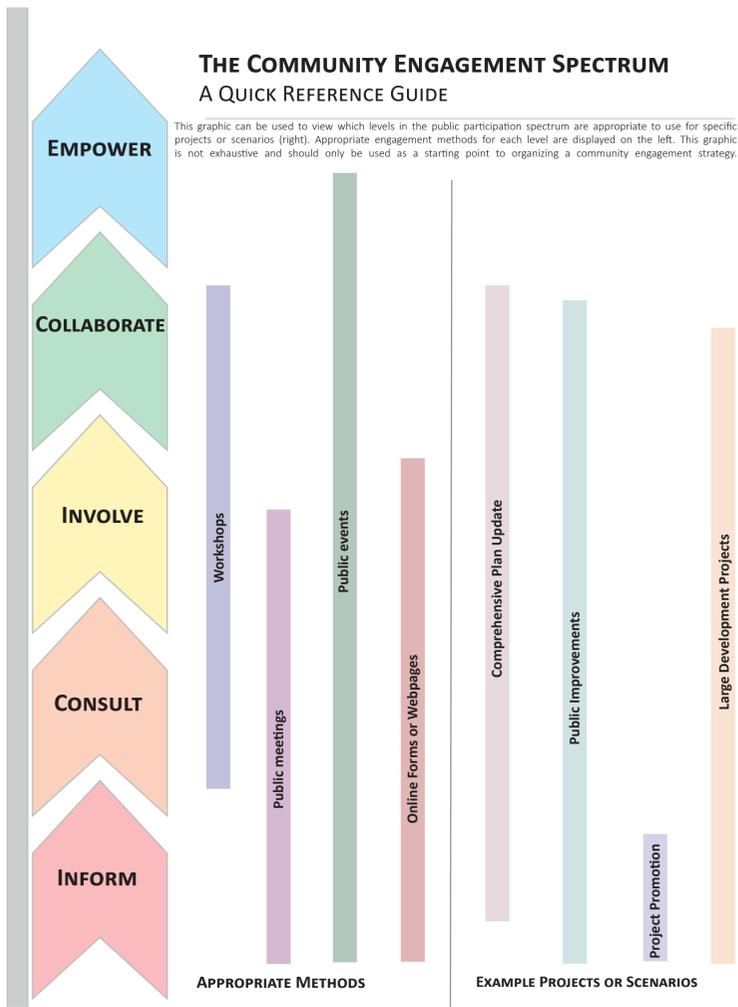


OPPORTUNITY IDAHO SPRINGS:

ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Opportunity Idaho Springs is a project focused on understanding how community engagement works in communities, particularly smaller communities. Community engagement is essential for communities to be able to adapt to change in a responsible manner. Through this project, community engagement is explored at general, small-scale, and contextual levels. This tiered analysis of community engagement provides the opportunity to provide recommendations to my client and the City of Idaho Springs regarding their ongoing community engagement efforts.

A QUICK GUIDE TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



THE ROLE OF DEVELOPERS

OVERVIEW

Developers play a critical role in the success of community engagement efforts. Developers can support public participation through working with local governments and other actors on a right-sized engagement strategy.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

More details about these important aspects to community engagement can be found in the corresponding report.

AUTHENTICITY

Typically, developers, whether local to the community or not, are viewed as outsiders or undesirables. Beginning the community engagement process early on, whether before or as a project begins, is key to developing authentic relationships and partnerships with community members. Building authenticity is key to building the trust necessary to implementing a successful project.

IN SMALL TOWNS

Word-of-mouth can travel quickly in small towns and squash projects before they are understood by the community

CONNECTIVITY

Developers need to account for socioeconomic, environmental, cultural, or other needs of a community. The developer needs the platform to show a community they understand or are trying to understand connections between their needs and the project

IN SMALL TOWNS

It is important to connect to the right stake holders AND connect your project to the greater community while also directly responding to community questions

FLEXIBILITY

It is important to tie into and enhance the existing public engagement strategy of the local government to streamline efforts. This requires flexibility of the developer to create a new plan or methods that better meet the needs of the community

IN SMALL TOWNS

Needs of communities will change and developers need to be flexible with how they proceed with public engagement.

RAISING MIGHTY ARGO

A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP

In order to build an engagement strategy that is aimed at reaching success for The Mighty Argo, the Argo team needs to utilize information from previous efforts to determine what has and has not been effective. In addition, a budget needs to be planned for future engagement efforts. Ensuring that responsibilities are allocated and coordinated in a streamlined manner can help save time and money. It is important to review previous decisions and partnerships regarding previous community engagement attempts to identify any areas of opportunity. Identifying these aspects can help build on the recommendations in this resource can provide a base to build your engagement strategy. A survey resource is provided on the final page for the Argo team to modify or use for future community engagement with Idaho Springs.



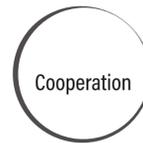
The existing Argo team is not large and could be bolstered through existing community advocates. Talking to these community advocates and understanding their capacities can help build the core Argo team.



The Argo team has already built or attempted to build many partnerships with and beyond the local community. It is important to review a list of stakeholders, current partners, and community organizations (City or County) to identify any groups important to the process that have not been in partnership with the project. This could include nonprofit organizations, religious organizations, schools, and newcomers to the community.



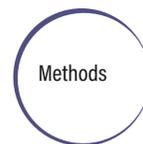
The current Value Statement for the project, while inspiring and thoughtful, does little to directly connect the project to the community. Showing the history and importance of The Argo is a great step and can be improved to demonstrate The Argo made the community in the past and it can be remade for modern day needs. An improvement to this Value Statement could look something like this, "The Argo: Where Idaho Springs' Beginnings Meets the Livelihoods of Today."



Future cooperation with the City is necessary for moving the Argo Project forward. It seems there is not as much action on behalf of city officials to promote The Argo. Demonstrating that cooperation is necessary to meeting goals outlined in the comprehensive plan is an important first step.



It is important to reevaluate how community engagement communications and efforts are being scheduled and coordinated. Additionally, it is important to make sure all team's, partner's, and stakeholder's efforts are coordinated to prevent any overlap.



The Argo team has experimented with engagement methods that have been effective in garnering support for the project. Many of these methods were interactive, educational, and provided the opportunity for greater community interaction. These methods will most likely be the most effective in future efforts. Researching examples of interactive, creative community engagement methods is a great place to start.



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