

obtain the diverse kinds of information that are required to reach a reasonable solution.

As is true of other parts of the book, "Engaging People" does not offer an exhaustive discussion of the subject. Its purpose is to highlight the importance of obtaining and incorporating input. The patterns offered are intended to show some ways that design and management decisions can draw on people's knowledge and help people understand the constraints of a situation.

In chapter 11, "Putting It Together," the focus is on how each of the patterns in the book speaks to the themes that were presented in previous chapters. The forty-five patterns are intended to be widely applicable to the many nearby natural settings that are part of people's daily lives. They provide a diverse collection of ways that some of the more desirable qualities of human beings can be called upon, fostered, and rewarded.

## Chapter 10

### Engaging People

"One size fits all" rarely provides a very good fit. A better fit requires accommodating to the many ways in which people differ. Some differences are due to the characteristics of a culture and even to the local history of a place. Others may have to do with the particular needs and inclinations of the people in an area. Without an exploration of local variations, the best laid plans and most creative solutions are vulnerable. This section looks at some ways to benefit from differences.

In chapter 2 we talked about differences in the ways experts and local citizens might see the same situation. Certainly, the nearby natural world is a case in point. It is too frequently the case that the public's concerns about the design and management of a natural setting are aired only when public participation is mandated, or when a situation has reached a point of divisiveness. Ideally, opportunities for engaging the local community would occur more routinely and readily. The intended users often have a great deal to contribute to the planning, design, and management of their environment.

The patterns in this chapter address the following issues:

- Participation can lead to unique solutions that speak to local needs and fit the local context.
- Genuine impact can lead to greater sense of ownership, stewardship, and community.
- People are sensitive to signs of making a difference.
- Information that is not understandable is unlikely to be a contribution.

When local needs and understanding are routinely incorporated in design and management the resulting solutions can be, and have been, far more satisfying for all concerned. For example, community partici-

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From: *With People in Mind: Design of Management of Everyday Nature*  
by Rachel Kaplan, Stephen Kaplan & Robert Ryan

M King



participation in tree-planting programs has been found to enhance social identity, self-esteem, and territoriality. Furthermore, the impact of participation has been shown to extend even to those who were not directly involved but were aware that participation had been included in the decision-making process.

Grassroots efforts have often served to coalesce community resources and to challenge bureaucratic assumptions. While such efforts have at times had negative consequences—such as protecting self-interests at the expense of others—it would be unfortunate to dismiss this potentially useful human resource. The wisdom and concern that energize such efforts can be enormous assets. It is important to acknowledge the insights and perspectives of local groups and invite their participation in design and management.

To be effective, however, the participation needs to be designed in a way that recognizes the distinct perspectives of the public and the experts. There is a considerable literature that documents differences between decision makers and users, between those with design training and others, between managers and citizens. The information held by locals is no less pertinent than the information held by those who wield power, money, and scientific “truths.” The discrepancies between what experts know and take for granted and what the public knows and holds dear must be examined. Incorporating participation is an effective way to recognize that experts and affected groups have different knowledge, perceptions, and needs. (See chapter 2, “Sharing Information.”)

Many cases of public participation have left both citizens and professionals feeling frustrated and angered. Effective participation requires more than good intentions. All too often the public finds the information that is presented to be incomprehensible and overwhelming. To further complicate the situation, the forum for encouraging the exchange of information is often intimidating and baffling to the public. Formal public hearings may be particularly difficult devices for comfortable communication in either direction. Fortunately, there are many other options available; alternatives can also provide ways to gain much wider participation than is often the case.

Incorporating public input and citizen concerns would be a far simpler task if the public represented a single point of view. That is rarely the case. The “public” is many publics. Their perspectives are necessarily incomplete since they are based on different experiences and knowledge. Their perspectives are likely to clash since they are based on different

needs and desires. Which is the “right” public to be heeded? Are there ways to learn about perspectives before there is a crisis, from the publics that are less likely to speak their minds? To explore these and related questions fully would require far more than a single chapter. On the other hand, some useful tools and techniques can be described briefly. It is our hope that even a very incomplete treatment of this important topic can serve as a starting point toward making public input a positive rather than a threatening experience.

This would be an important and hopeful step, since the process of trial and error is frequently an essential step in finding a good solution. Small experiments can be particularly useful in trying things out before introducing a massive change; they can be sensitive to local input and feedback. Many characteristics of small experiments, such as greater public involvement, attention to what works, and willingness to make changes, are important aspects of effective participation.

This chapter is divided into two parts, roughly related to *design* and *management*. Design requires anticipating what a place will be like in the future. Too often there are unwelcome surprises: “We had no idea it would be like that!” Amidst the hope and expectation that changes will bring improvements, there is often less attention to the things one takes for granted. People sometimes do not realize how important aspects of their existing setting are to them until they no longer have them. The patterns related to management address ways to encourage and sustain stewardship, permitting local individuals and groups an ongoing part in sustaining their own setting.

The patterns:

#### *Design*

- EP-D1 *Start early, include many*
- EP-D2 *Understandable information*
- EP-D3 *Providing alternatives*
- EP-D4 *The art of inviting feedback*

#### *Management*

- EP-M1 *Opportunities for participation*
- EP-M2 *Why should I read this?*
- EP-M3 *Small experiments*

► **GENUINE PARTICIPATION NEEDS TO START EARLY AND REACH THE DIVERSE SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION.**

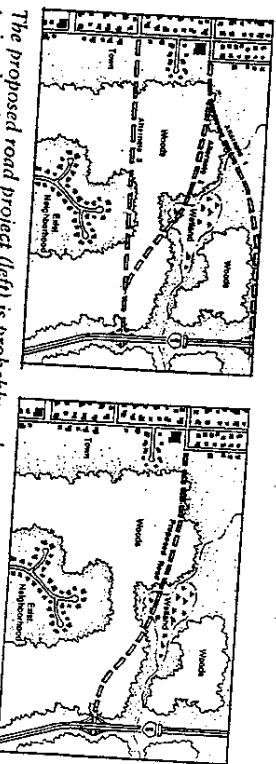
**EP:D1 Start early, include many**

When should public input be sought? There are several factors that favor inviting participation. One of these is fear that the affected groups will be displeased about the changes that might take place. Another is that the planners or designers are not yet ready to let the public know what the changes will encompass. While those may be appropriate reasons for delays from an agency's perspective, such delays readily lead to community divisiveness and hostility.

For those who are likely to be affected by impending changes, there is a desire to be included early in the planning process. People want to know about decisions that may affect them, and—more than that—they are likely to want to take a part in finding solutions that speak to their setting and their concerns.

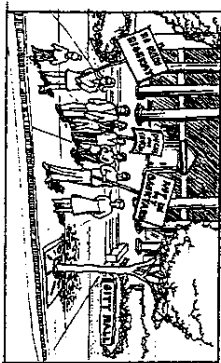


*There are many ways to involve citizens in the planning of public parks and other civic improvements.*



*The proposed road project (left) is probably early enough in the planning stages to involve the public. By contrast, the project shown on the right is probably too far along to allow for meaningful public participation.*

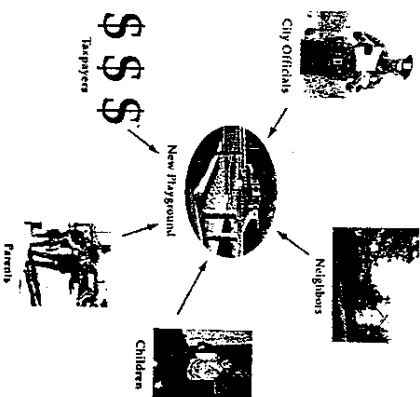
Involving people sooner necessarily means that many aspects of a solution will not yet have been worked out. Thus, by initiating participation at a relatively early stage, there is a greater chance that public input can have a genuine impact on the outcome. People welcome the opportunity to have their views heard; they have also been soured by being asked and then ignored.



*Participation of citizens in the planning process does not guarantee public cooperation or approval, but not including the public can have dire consequences for public officials.*

While there are important reasons for getting public input early in the process, there are also reasons to involve the public at many other times during planning and design. The next few patterns address a variety of formats that can be useful at different stages in the process.

It is unrealistic to think that participation will involve everyone who might be impacted by a change. Is it realistic, however, to think that the opinions of a few influential people in the community are appropriate and sufficient? Depending on the nature of a project, it is useful to think of ways to involve a wide spectrum of the public—or at least to provide the opportunity for their input. Once a situation is permitted to become divisive and friction in the community is hard to ignore, the various stakeholders are likely to take part in efforts to negotiate a solution. It would be better to consider those potentially affected groups without the pressure and polarization induced by conflict.



*A wide variety of stakeholders should be involved in the planning of public spaces such as new playgrounds.*

**EP:D2 Understandable information**

➤ MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION REQUIRES INFORMATION THAT IS READILY UNDERSTOOD.

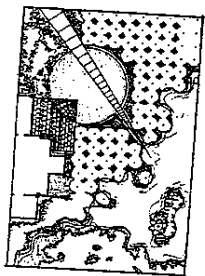
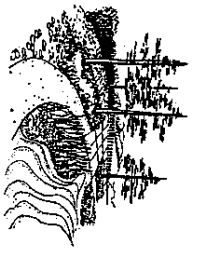
Providing useful information to the public is much more difficult than generally recognized. The cost of providing information that is not understood can be substantial. These costs readily express themselves in the form of frustration, distress, distrust, hostility, and a sense of futility.

When those guiding the participation process are fearful of the public's reaction, they may be tempted to provide information that is overwhelming and too technical for the public to understand. While some citizens may be daunted by material that is too difficult, others may express their anger with little reservation. There is much more to be gained by considering what information the public might perceive as useful and helpful and by finding ways to communicate it so that a meaningful exchange can take place.



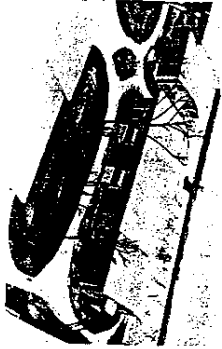
*Physical models can help people imagine the setting.*

*Savignoles and partners can mean little to non-designers. Site plans can be difficult to visualize in three dimensions.*

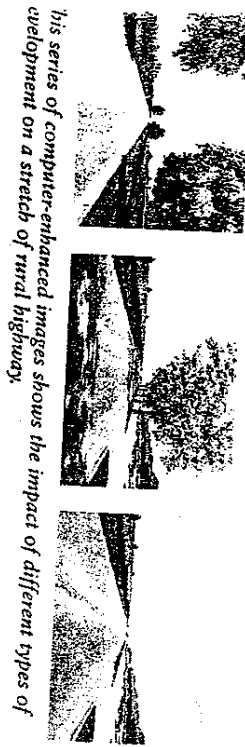


There is no guaranteed path to understandable information, but some approaches have a higher likelihood of success than others. Pictures can be effective. But the key word is "can." Just because the information is visual does not mean it is understandable. Photographs of existing places are often helpful; artistic sketches might be less so, especially if they rely on a professional shorthand that is too abstract for people who are not trained in design. Similarly, even though site plans are visual, few people can imagine them as three-dimensional.

Since it is difficult for people to imagine settings that are not yet in existence, physical models can be helpful. They can be photographed or used interactively. People find such models useful and understandable even if they lack detail. For example, layers of foamboard glued together to approximate structures can be easily interpreted. Computer simulation methods can also be effective for presenting a future environment in three dimensions.

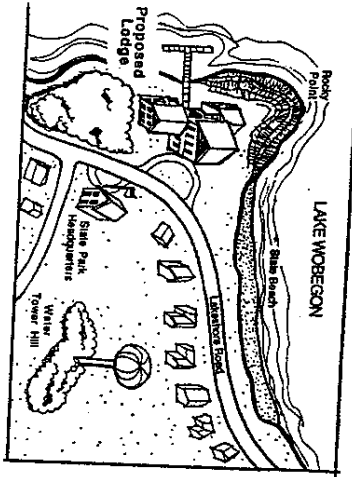


*Simple models convey the appropriate level of information for many public participation efforts (top row). Detailed models, on the other hand, require a larger investment of time and money without a corresponding increase in public understanding of the project (bottom row).*



*this series of computer-enhanced images shows the impact of different types of development on a stretch of rural highway.*

A lack of detail can be helpful. When a great deal of detail is presented, the public might suspect that critical decisions have already been made and that, the desire to obtain local input is not genuine. Detail can also focus the discussion at an inappropriate level of analysis. For example, architectural detail of a new building or decisions about particular plantings may be appropriate later in the decision process but would be distracting when decisions about siting have not yet been made. People are often reassured if they can place themselves in the context of the planned change. This might involve finding one's neighborhood or orienting landmark on a map of the proposed project. Rather than considering citizens' efforts to find such information as parochial, it is appropriate to encourage them to take the time to feel comfortable with the material.



*By highlighting familiar neighborhoods and landmarks, development plans can help local residents understand the context of proposed changes.*

There are also times when direct exposure, rather than simulation, is an effective way to achieve understanding about an impending project. A field trip can have many benefits. It can provide the opportunity to

walk through an area, explore the results of previous efforts, and discuss implications of alternative solutions.



*Field trips can help focus discussion on the place rather than on ideological differences between stakeholder groups.*

**EP-D3 Providing alternatives**

► PEOPLE RESPOND MORE USEFULLY IF PROVIDED REASONABLE CHOICES.

The purpose of providing alternatives is not to force a choice or pick a “winner.” Rather, alternatives should provide some notions of what is feasible; they can help to communicate the range of issues that need to be considered. The final solution is likely to incorporate pieces of several alternatives. As such, the solution cannot be anticipated—it is emergent, permitting both local input and the designer’s creative reactions to help give it shape.



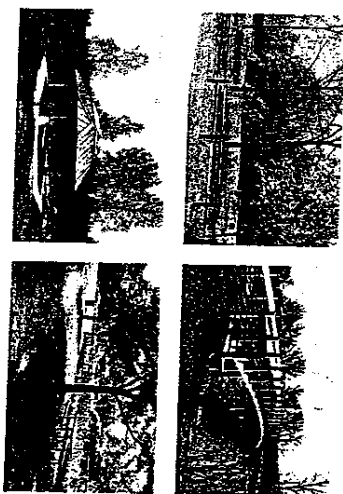
*Alternative plaza designs with and without a proposed sculpture.*

Presenting several alternatives to the public in their full complexity may be overwhelming. Furthermore, if each alternative is difficult to understand, such a format could defeat the intention of permitting the public to consider a range of solutions. Instead, it often is effective to present the alternatives in terms of separable, distinct chunks that could be combined in different ways.

For example, rather than presenting three big solutions for a park design (emphasizing sports facilities, natural areas, or an interface with commercial facilities), it is useful to provide images of the pieces or ele-

**Design ♦ EP-D3 Providing alternatives**

*Having people respond to a variety of elements rather than to a final site plan allows the designer to weave those elements into a workable solution.*



ments that could be combined in a variety of ways in a final outcome. These might include bleachers, baseball diamond, tennis courts, concession stands, parkside boutiques, a grove of shade trees, trails and seating areas, and picnic shelters. By providing choices, one permits the participant to see a range of what could be done.

If citizens are asked to respond to choices, it is crucial that their feedback be a reasonable indicator of their sentiments. That means that there need to be a few examples of a proposed alternative rather than the dependence on a single instance. Providing a single version can easily lead to misleading or confusing results. For example, if a single image of a grove of shade trees is presented, in a rectilinear pattern, surrounded by pavement, it may be difficult to know whether the public’s response is to the trees, their arrangement, or the setting. Having a second example that also includes shade trees, but in a distinctly different arrangement, would permit comparison of the responses.



*Often it is necessary to include several instances of the same type of scene in order to determine the attributes to which people are responding.*

**EP:D4 The art of inviting feedback**

► THE FORMAT FOR GETTING FEEDBACK HAS TO BE FRIENDLY AND APPROPRIATE.

Many well-intended efforts to involve the public yield little useful information and leave many bad feelings. While some citizens are articulate, fearless public speakers, and quite clear on what options are available, they are a rarity. That does not mean that the majority of the public is incompetent or ignorant or useless. Rather, one must find ways to obtain public input that are compatible with the public's strengths and concerns.

*Going to where the people are is one way to elicit feedback. In this instance, residents attending a community festival are being asked to choose park elements from examples shown on photo boards.*

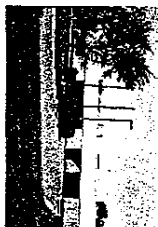


The emphasis here is on obtaining responses from diverse segments of the public in ways that do not result in extensive efforts on the part of a few citizens. People want to be asked about the information they have and about their concerns and preferences, but they can be easily put off by how they are asked. Satisfying approaches to public participation in planning and design provide information about constraints but also assure that the public's viewpoints and wisdom are incorporated in the process.

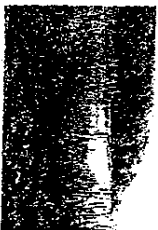
"What do you want" is often a doomed question. Many people have no notion how to answer such a question. Others may tell you what they want, but it is likely to be unrealistic. By asking the question, then, one easily intimidates those who lack a ready answer and falsely raises the hopes of those whose requests cannot be met.

By contrast, using photographs to present solutions and asking people to indicate their preferences works very well. That is a task that is not only manageable but even enjoyable. Models also provide a way to show alternatives and to elicit a quick indication of preference. Through the

process of seeing alternatives, citizens can learn about the range of possibilities and can contribute their concerns (see "Readings").



1 2 3 4 5



1 2 3 4 5



1 2 3 4 5



1 2 3 4 5



1 2 3 4 5



1 2 3 4 5

The first five pages of the booklet consist of photographs. The pictures were taken in many places and are intended as suggestions of how this area could look in the future. Please think of these scenes in terms of places that you might see in the North Maine/Huron River Study Area.

For EACH photograph, please indicate how much you would like the kind of setting it represents if *it were in this area*. The more you like the scene for this area, the higher the number you would circle on the scale beneath the photograph, so that:

Preference:  
 1 = not at all  
 2 = a little  
 3 = somewhat  
 4 = quite a bit  
 5 = very much

*A photo questionnaire is a readily understandable method for discovering people's preference for particular environmental elements.*

Many other formats can be used to obtain public response, and often a mixture of approaches is needed (see "Readings"). Instead of a formal public hearing, for example, citizens can be divided into small working groups to discuss alternatives. Feedback from each group can be obtained by having a group member report to the larger group, by asking the group as a whole or its members to complete a short survey, or by having a designated person record the group's discussion.



*Models, especially those with movable parts, are useful for obtaining feedback from people of all ages.*

**EP:MI Opportunities for participation**

➤ PERMITTING LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NEEDS TO BE AN ONGOING PART OF MANAGEMENT.

Here are some statistics from one organization (The Nature Conservancy), in one state (Illinois), for one year (1996):

- Number of volunteers who worked in 1996 — 5,602
- Number of hours spent doing ecological management work — 56,986
- Number of special events held — 101
- Number of people who attended these events — 2,248
- Number of acres under management — 67,302

Clearly, the environment benefits from this outpouring of effort. Less tangible are the benefits to the participants, but the personal gains are many and far-reaching. One would hardly expect ventures such as the Volunteer Stewardship Network to persist and grow if the participants did not find satisfaction in those activities. In fact, local people participate in the well-being of their environments in thousands of settings. Programs vary along many dimensions, including the nature of the tasks involved, the organizational characteristics, and the numbers of volunteers and their experience.



Volunteers can make important contributions to park maintenance.

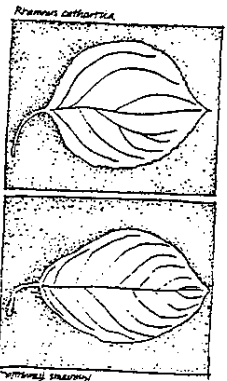
Newspapers, newsletters, and magazines are rich in anecdotal evidence of the significance to the participants and the community of programs that draw on local human resources. Research results also point

**Management ♦ EP:MI Opportunities for participation**

to participants' sense of accomplishment, joy in learning new things, pride in contributing to the appearance of their neighborhood, and feeling that the enormity of environmental degradation need not be so hopeless.

Wonderful as they can be, it is important to acknowledge that volunteer programs present a number of challenges. Sufficient organizational leadership are needed to sustain well-intended programs. Unfortunately, agencies often lack the resources required for organizing and supervising such activities. They also may not have the time it takes to build a relationship and understand what skills volunteers bring to the situation. Without the necessary guidance, volunteers can become discouraged when they do not know what to do next or inadvertently cause damage by actions that are contrary to the organization's plan. Such challenges are surmountable however, and the consequences of permitting local involvement can provide benefits to the land, the agency, and the participants. Opportunities for local participation are numerous. Residents in apartment complexes can participate in the greening of their neighborhood by being allowed to grow plants outside

**Call To All Buckhorn Haters!**



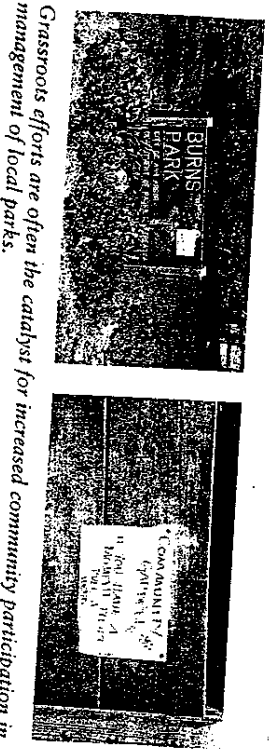
**WANTED: DEAD**

March 19 (Saturday)  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Dow Field Prairie  
We need help eliminating the dreaded buckhorn haters (*Rhus typhina* and *R. glabra*) from the prairie restoration project of the Arborvitae's Dow Field. Buckhorn species are aggressive invaders, out competing native flora, and disrupting habitat and nesting birds. They are also highly flammable and several other exotic plants under control.

Professor Robert Orest, who is leading efforts to restore the prairie grasses and forbs in Dow Field, needs four crew members to help with the work. Tasks and hand saws. Plan to be a buckhorn cutter today! Bring identification tags and hand saws if you have them. Reservations will be served.

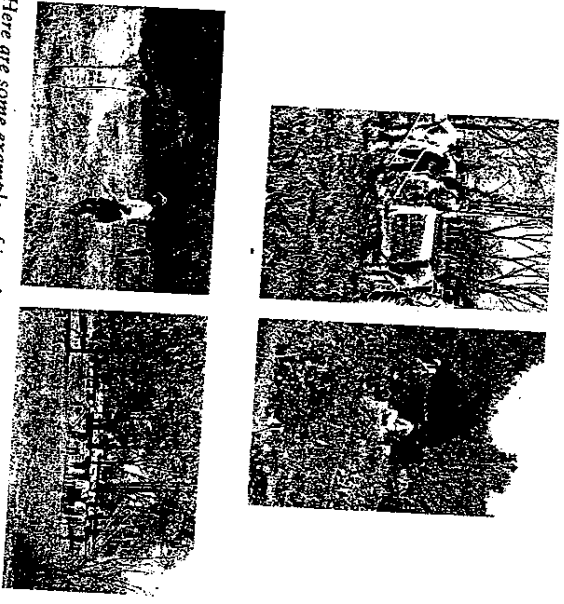
An advertisement that suggests that local involvement can be fun.





Grassroots efforts are often the catalyst for increased community participation in management of local parks.

their own dwelling. Residents can be invited to participate in maintaining parks or trails in neighborhood parks. Local talent can be tapped for helping with youth outdoor programs. Although it requires flexibility and ingenuity, utilizing such resources can create a situation where everyone wins.



Here are some examples of involving volunteers, in some instances jointly with staff, in local activities. Top: A tree planting project (left) and botanical garden maintenance (right). Bottom: Helping in the last example learn about historic farming practices while helping to maintain a demonstration garden.

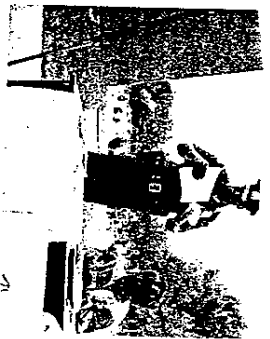
**EP-M2 Why should I read this?**

➤ BROCHURES AND PAMPHLETS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE READ IF THEY ARE USER FRIENDLY.

Even when people have been provided with all the information they could possibly need, they often don't follow the instructions. The fact that needed information is right in front of them does not necessarily make it readily available. There are many reasons *not* to read or heed material and not to follow instructions. Rather than accusing people of incompetence, it may be more appropriate to examine ways to make information relevant and useful.

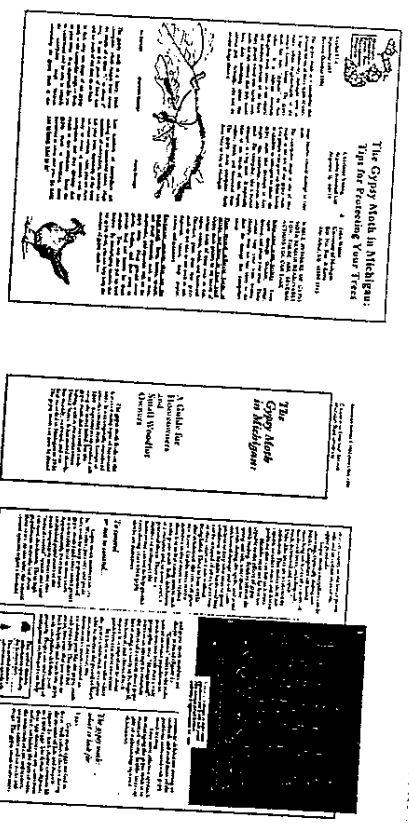
The pattern on understandable information (EP:D2) addresses the idea of providing images of places that are not yet existent. The emphasis in this pattern is on the many occasions when brochures or pamphlets are used for informing the public (for example, about curbside recycling, a particular nature area, or ways to manage GYPSY moth infestations). Such materials frequently fail to achieve their intent.

*Even government officials can be skeptical about why they should read something.*



A few simple ideas may be useful when preparing such material:

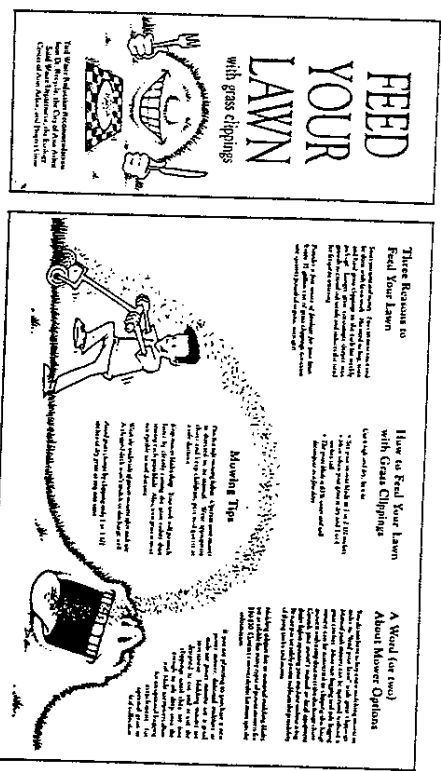
**Holding back:** The temptation to include too much information is enormous. The difficulty is that the quantity does not seem excessive to the person who is already informed. If anything, the information provided may feel frustrated by how little of the important information is being conveyed. To the novice recipient, by contrast, the material may be overwhelming and the temptation not to look at it at all substantial.



The left bulletin strikes an appropriate balance between text and graphics. The right one, on the other hand, may provide more technical information than many readers would find manageable.

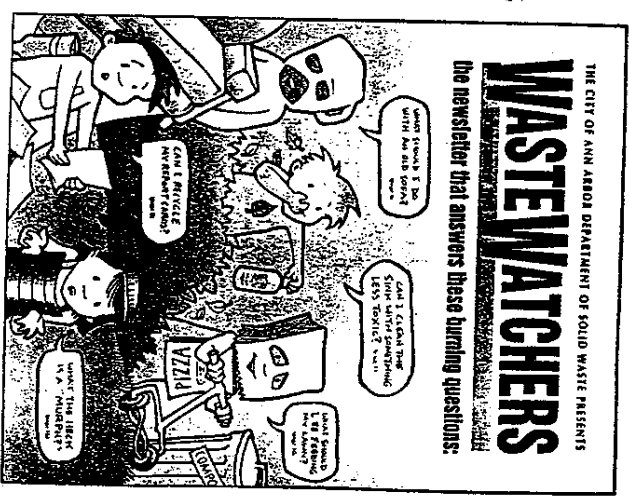
The “where-they’re-at” principle. If a quick glance suggests to the reader that the information is “the same old stuff,” the likelihood of a second glance is small. If it seems technical and difficult, that, too, will end the process. The material has a greater chance of being read if the reader’s existing knowledge and concerns are recognized and incorporated. Since users of the material will have differing prior knowledge, written materials cannot be specifically geared to each person’s experience. Nonetheless, one can ask readers to consider their own perceptions of a situation or draw on likely common experiences that pertain to the situation. Rather than assuming that readers are hungry for the information that is provided, attention to their knowledge, worries, and circumstances can lead to more effective information exchange.

Telling a story. Material intended for younger audiences often is engaging and easy to grasp, but, for some reason, adults are treated differently. Chances are that attractive pages, appropriate graphics, understandable prose, and intriguing content will more effectively communicate material even to adult audiences. The notions of understanding and exploration are neither specific to younger people nor pertinent exclusively to environments. A story has two crucial aspects in terms of attracting and holding people’s interest. First, it provides concrete imagery. Second, it creates both uncertainty and the promise of resolving it. Material structured in this way is engaging and encourages exploration.




Environmental information should incorporate the audience’s existing experience.

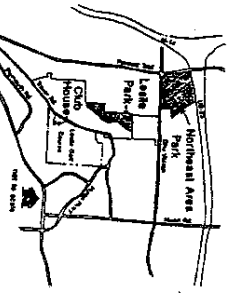
Sometimes adults are afraid to ask questions. This brochure addresses that issue in a humorous, nonthreatening manner:



**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE  
NORTHEAST AREA  
& LESLIE PARKS  
IMPROVEMENTS**



**Time:** 7:30 P.M.-9:00 P.M.  
**Date:** Thursday, February 15, 1998  
**Place:** Leslie Park Golf Course Club house  
2120 Traver Road



The Department of Transportation currently has studies in progress to make improvements to Northeast Area 2 and Leslie Park. The studies will include the transportation, physical uses for the parks and the surrounding neighborhoods. The parks are some of the most beautiful and historically important in the state. The studies will also include the study of the surrounding area. The studies will also include the study of the surrounding area. The studies will also include the study of the surrounding area.

Many citizens would find this announcement less than inviting.

► TRYING THINGS OUT IN A QUICK, SAFE, AND SIMPLE WAY CAN FACILITATE GOOD DECISIONS.

**EP:M3 Small experiments**



Small ideas...



...can lead to big adventures.



Planting a seedling...



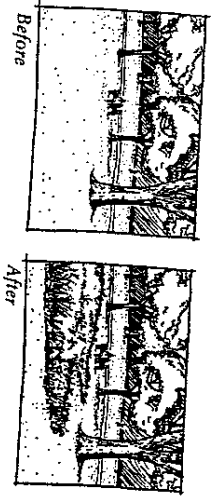
...can create a forest.

Often when one is not quite sure what to do, trying something out and seeing what happens can be a big help. Such small experiments are so common that they seem unremarkable. Yet they are a powerful means for sharpening our intuitions, overcoming indecision, and testing ideas without undue baggage. These tentative efforts are not intended for yielding definitive answers. Yet the accumulation of partial and imperfect answers can contribute to greater understanding as well as to new explorations.

Small experiments can also be a powerful tool in less personal contexts. They can provide a way for citizens and experts to work together, for local talent to help develop solutions that maintain local identity, for innovations that are appropriate to the context. The key ideas in small experiments derive from those two words: *small* and *experiment*. The intention is to keep the efforts at a modest scale: small enough to be relatively manageable; small enough that mistakes are not overwhelming; small enough that, in due time, one will have the energy to tackle yet another small experiment. The notion of experiment suggests a quest, a search for an answer.

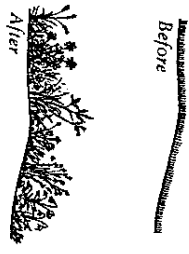
A small experiment stands in marked contrast to large-scale research. Research is often intimidating and costly, with outcomes that may be difficult to comprehend. The results may fail to speak to the intended purposes despite a major commitment of time and resources. To the traditional researcher the lack of ideal conditions precludes definitive answers. Small experiments, by contrast, provide a way to address some of the intended purposes within the constraints of the existing context. There is no assumption of perfection, but rather a sense of getting closer to a useful understanding.

Smallness can express itself in terms of a variety of dimensions. The physical area can be kept small—for example, by converting turf grass to a wildflower meadow in only one section of a park. An experiment



can be tried on a limited basis—for example, introducing an effort to have the public maintain flower beds in only one or two parks rather than throughout the system. The number of people involved in the experiment can also be kept small—for example, testing new orienting material with a small group of visitors.

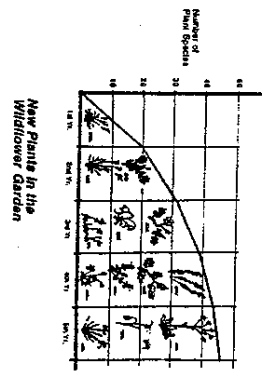
While small experiments are necessarily modest, incomplete, and imperfect, they can nonetheless be extraordinarily useful. Furthermore, one can gain information without costly commitments that may need to be undone. That is not to say, however, that anything goes. The following are topics that should be considered in planning an effective experi-



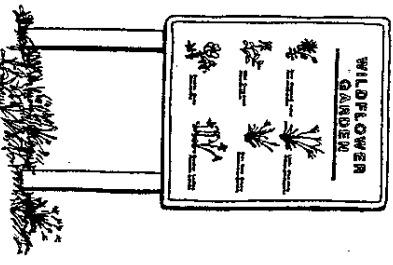
**Goal or purpose.** The small experiment needs to be about something—not everything. It should have a focus. A clear question provides motivation; it also helps in formulating a study that is likely to yield useful results. For example, the goals in converting a small area from turf grass to a wildflower meadow might be to increase environmental diversity and to educate passersby. Or the goal may be to have the management staff find out if they can use volunteers effectively. The single most damaging problem in attempts to do small experiments stems from devoting too little effort to thinking through what one hopes to learn.

**Tracking.** Small experiments require one to be mindful of what is going on. They depend on efforts to be somewhat observant and systematic, to keep track of key aspects of the situation. The information gathering needs to be manageable. Too much information can be overwhelming; too little information can also be problematic. The amount and form of information to be gathered is thus important to weigh before launching the study. For example, a project that explores having community participation in the maintenance of flower beds could

involve weekly monitoring of how well the beds are maintained using a quick checklist to record the presence of wild flowers, damaged plants, etc. It is also useful to consider whether some information may be available that would not require additional cost or effort. For example, information about the numbers of people enrolling in a program, requesting material, or attending an event is often easily obtained.



**Dissemination.** To be useful, the results of the small experiment need to be shared. Depending on the context, shared information can let participants know that their input made a difference; it provides an opportunity to let a wider audience know what was learned and what next steps might be taken as a result. Effective ways to communicate the outcomes will also vary with the circumstances. Sometimes inclusion in a newsletter provides a useful way to reach the intended audience. A mailing to people who are involved with the project may also be appropriate.



In the wildflower meadow example, the shared information could include signs that indicate the increased species diversity. In other instances, guided walks through an area can serve to inform visitors of the results. Sharing seeds and plants can also be an appreciated way to share the results of a small experiment. Whatever the approach, it is important that the results are shared and that the form of communication is likely to be user friendly. Once again, as with other patterns concerning the sharing of information, it is important to consider how the message is conveyed.