We're Trying To Reach You!

A Look at Outreach Conducted by Nonprofit Organizations in Seattle

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CEP Class of 2017

June 4, 2017

Abstract

Tension can grow between local community groups and people perceived as having the power to make large-scale changes (like city government employees, commissions, and boards) when community members feel that their input is not considered, or that they are not reaching City of Seattle officials through the correct methods. Nonprofits serve as an intermediary between communities and City of Seattle Departments. This project identifies the strategies currently used by various nonprofits and citizen groups to collect feedback and pass community knowledge to local planning officials, then compares those to theoretical outreach strategies. It consists of a literature review addressing the importance of citizen engagement; a collection of practices for outreach to local communities; a series of interviews with employees of nonprofit organizations operating in the Seattle area; a matrix of the services provided by nonprofit organizations; a matrix of the nonprofit organizations online presence and a matrix of their relationships with City of Seattle Departments. The purpose of this project is to mitigate future tensions by recognizing the work that nonprofits do, identify where connections are missing and provide recommendations for using the time of staff members at local community organizations efficiently.

Introduction

Equitable public outreach and engagement is a crucial ongoing process, vital to creating a livable community with everyone's best interests at heart. There are often many complaints from the community concerning the extent, timing, and methods of collecting community input. To further this point, once the information has been gathered it is important to understanding what the intended uses are for the data and how it will be analysed.

Throughout this project, I have identified local community organizations as a main relayer of information to the City of Seattle departments. It's important to examine the methods that both nonprofit organizations and City of Seattle departments use to collect information. This is in attempt to answer the question: In the City of Seattle, what are the best public outreach methods currently being used based on their practicality and ability/constraints of the people who

work at non-profits? I want to examine what methods for conducting public outreach could look like. Then, analyze what differentiates current practices and methods based on their degree of usefulness to improve the way that public outreach is conducted. The end goal of this project is to identify the most resource efficient strategies for various nonprofits and citizen groups to give feedback to local planning officials currently within the City of Seattle.

Methods

My first step is a literature review to determine the role of public outreach in the planning process and why public outreach is considered essential. In this literature review, I will establish the challenges of conducting public outreach in a way that reaches the most number or people with the least cost.

Then, I will situate these common themes within the Seattle context by analyzing existing opportunities for community members to give feedback directly to City of Seattle departments. My third step will be to conduct informational interviews with neighborhood organizers and local city officials who are engaged in the public outreach process. These interviews will determine the resources that their organizations offer, the methods in which the selected interviewees have been involved and whether or not their believed the process to be successful. It will ultimately evaluate whether the correct method of public outreach is being used based on interviewees' personal experiences.

Next, I will come to conclusions about the work being done by nonprofit organizations in Seattle, the methods they are using to outreach to their communities and each tool's usefulness in collecting public input.

Finally, I will produce a set of recommendations for the best methods of public outreach and non-profit work.

Literature Review

The Importance of Public Participation

The amount of research concerning the role and importance of public participation in planning decisions has been steadily increasing, especially over the past several years. There is no one standard definition about what it means to perform "good" public outreach or the amount necessary due to the locality of issues. The the majority of top public policy, urban planning, public health, and sociology scholars agree that asking for the ideas of "non-planners" almost always benefits the overall project being planned. John Forester, an associate professor of city and regional planning at Cornell University, highlights the importance of public outreach by arguing that when it is not conducted in an appropriate way is negatively affects future proposals.

> "Failing to listen, we [planners] fail to learn, and we also damage our working relationships with others. If they do not listen carefully to members of the public, planners will lose any reputation for responsiveness or fairness, any public trust they might have had" (Forester 109).

Raymond Burby, a professor emeritus and University of North Carolina, furthers his idea by saying "when issues lack publics, the formulation of planning proposals tends to be dominated by technical experts… which raises fundamental issues for democratic governance" (34). This is a commonly held belief when examining the social equity implied in local public participation and the long term success of the projects being planned. The cross-discipline nature of large scale planning decisions means more collaboration is necessary. The benefit of implementing community feedback has been studied across many disciplines. For example scholars of both deliberation and governance agree that helping to plan local resources "impacts the quality of life and economic outputs" and also serves as a tool for the "development of democratic citizenship and practices" (Melo & Baiocchi 588). By soliciting feedback communities benefit from a better end product, participants develop a sense of ownership over the project, and they may even become better citizens.

The importance of public outreach can be seen through many professional code of ethics and toolkits. For example, the American Institute of Certified Planners, which provides the only nationwide verification of planners' qualifications, requires every planner through Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to "strive to provide full, clear, and accurate information on planning issues to citizens and governmental decision-makers" and under section A.4 states that a planner must strive to allow citizens to have "meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs" (American Institute of Certified Planners). It qualifies that "participation should be broad enough to include those who lack formal organization or influence" (American Institute of Certified Planners). In order to ensure that the code of ethics is being correctly followed, the AICP offers an ethics officer who is available to discuss how to handle situations where ethical issues may occur.

This requirement for public participation is also seen at a citywide level throughout the nation. According to the *Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide* published by the City of Seattle, the goals of public engagement are to "empower communities to make decisions for themselves"; "release the capacity and potential of communities"; and "change relationships between service providers and communities" (5). While many people get frustrated with the amount of time, resources, and energy it takes to conduct thorough public outreach it is arguable that it "increases the potential for the actions of government agencies to better reflect people's needs and for the benefits to be more equitably distributed" (Alverti 7).

The Importance of Local Knowledge

Guiding questions for this section include: *In what ways and/or areas is the community knowledgeable? How do they demonstrate and articulate their knowledge? To what extent should community knowledge be weighed against that of urban planning professionals?*

Ellen Wratten who is a leading researcher in the public policy of urban development, argues that "community participation which openly reveals conflicts also has to be able to

resolve them without the less powerful members of the community becoming worse off in the process" (2). She claims that often the public outreach and input process expose issues in the community that planner may not be able to solve. Instead of tackling many problems at once, the scope of public outreach may be limited whether intentional or not. This sentiment is echoed by Jason Coburn who is the director of the Institute of Urban and Regional Development and the Center for Global Healthy Cities at UC Berkeley. He states, "local knowledge should never be ignored by planners seeking to improve the lives of communities experiencing the greatest risks" (Cobern 420). Local knowledge can include knowledge of specific characteristics, circumstances, events, and relationships, as well as important understandings of their meaning (Coburn 421). Melo and Baiocchi, who jointly approach this issues from a political science and sociology perspective would agree in the importance of implementing local knowledge. "Redistributive outcomes are brought about when the active involvement of citizens in policy-making and implementation are put in place" (Melo & Baiocchi 596).

While agreeing with the intentions behind public outreach, Ioannis Pissourios argues that "the efficiency in planning [bottom-up approaches] is inversely proportional to the size of the community that is planned" (93). This is an insightful point to bring up especially when deliberating about how to best use limited resources. He continues by saying that "participatory processes become cumbersome when the population size increases, slowing down the process of urban intervention, which is already an time-consuming process (93)." Samuel Brody who focuses on hazard mitigation policy and environmental planning, agrees with Pissourious saying that in situations where quick decisions are necessary "high levels of participation may increase conflict by having disputing parties at the negotiating table" and inevitably "frustrate planners by slowing down the decision-making process (409-410). In fact, "the methods often pit citizens against each other, as they feel compelled to speak of the issues in polarizing terms to get their points across" (Innes and Booher 419).

Common barriers to participation

Education, time, and level of interest are the main deterrents stopping citizens from giving feedback directly to city departments. In his TEDxToronto talk, *The Antidote to Apathy,* Dave Meslin makes a humorous but pointed comment about comprehension level necessary to read a proposed land use sign when compared to a traditional marketing campaign for shoes (Meslin). While this does does not technically violate any policies, Meslin eludes to a lack of interest and technical language as common barriers to citizen participation. It's important to consider the fluency in policy and land use terms necessary for the local public to make informed suggestions when asked for their ideas. Innes and Booher have found that "most often these methods discourage busy and thoughtful individuals from wasting their time going through what appear to be nothing more than rituals designed to satisfy legal requirements." (420). Burby agrees by stating that "planners themselves can stifle participation by the choices they make about public involvement" (34). While public involvement is a central concern for urban planner, it is a challenge to decide how best to implement such programs given the "many difficulties inherent in the typical public involvement process" (Brabham 242).

Realistic Public Outreach Processes

All of the foundational urban planners cited in this literature review are in favor of equitable public engagement in theory with a few reservations about its application. The main difference between these authors is what they believe is economically feasible and realistic. John Forester demands realistic expectations about the amount of the public engagement that can be done while still meeting deadlines. Both Fagence and Forester, long time practitioners of public outreach in environmentally distressed communities, attempt to balance the process of public outreach with real world constraints. Fagence states simply that "meaningful participation may be impeded by a number of conceptual or practical problems" (338). Choosing the correct method of public engagement is difficult and should operate under constraints. Fagence argues that "the very multiplicity, diversity and complexity of government activity and responsibility is

such that the notion needs circumscription by what is realistic" (331). Forester also argues that needs to be a balance between an academic literature focused approach and practical experience:

> "Both planning practice and planning theory can use insights from the scholarly literature on dispute resolution and from astute mediation practice to help divers and distrusting stakeholders to learn about issues and their differing interests, and to propose mutually beneficial, mutually agreeable, options for joint action" (455).

Some newer approaches to public outreach include using technology like the virtual city-halls, webinars, conference calls, websites, and social media to disperse information and to recieve feedback. No matter whether this is deemed beneficial or a waste of time, technological advances will have a"sustained an impact on planning and planners which has progressively demanded a revision of the methodology and philosophy for planning" (Fagence 344). Brabham argues that traditional "interdisciplinary and participatory design collaborations still seem to be the best option for problem solving in a democratic society of the digital, postindustrial age" (29) even with the emerging technology due to a lack technical literacy. There is a high potential to counteract the goal of reaching the widest demographic of people when using technology for the bulk of public outreach. Despite debate about how best to conduct public outreach a desirable public participation process is one that enables citizens to shape planning decisions while increasing their levels of social and political empowerment" (Laurian 53).

Context

Seattle has been shifting its focus to equitable development and inclusive outreach for many years. This increased focus on equity through public engagement can be seen through the contracting of Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) as community resources, the publication of the Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide, and the renaming of the fourth core value of the Seattle Comprehensive from "Social Equity" to "Race and Social Equity", among many other actions. There are many opportunities for community members to give feedback directly to City of Seattle departments, but they seem to be reluctant.

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

The Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide was published by the Race and Social Justice Initiative run through the Office for Civil Rights in January of 2012. In this document outreach is defined as "activities intentionally employed to make contact and potentially develop working relationships with specific individuals and/or groups for purposes including, but not restricted to, sharing information, education, or service provision" (Office for Civil Rights, 26). This document is intended as a standard and resource for all City of Seattle staff to promote inclusive engagement. The goals for public outreach are to "empower communities to make decisions for themselves"; to "release the capacity and potential of communities"; and ultimately to "change relationships between service providers and communities" (Office for Civil Rights). The main strategies to accomplish these goals are:

1. Build personal relationships with target population
2. Create a welcoming atmosphere
3. Increase accessibility
4. Develop alternative methods for engagement
5. Maintain a presence within the community
6. Partner with diverse organizations and agencies

The success of this framework relies directly on the work and input of local nonprofits and organizations as a mediator for community input. The Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide specifical aims to exchange information rather than collect it.

Department of Neighborhoods Community Engagement Coordinators

The Department of Neighborhood announced in just April that Neighborhood District Coordinators would be retitled Community Engagement Coordinators. To go along with this change in title, they are now housed in the Seattle Municipal Tower instead of their respective districts. The four Community Engagement Coordinators are responsible for meeting with communities, introducing communities to government resources, and serving as liaisons between various neighborhood organizations and City of Seattle Departments.

Figure 1: Contact Information for Community Engagement Coordinators

North Sector (Council Districts 4, 5, 6)
Laurie Ames, **Laurie.Ames@seattle.gov** or 206.684.0320

Central Sector (Council Districts 3,7)
Karen Ko, **Karen.Ko@seattle.gov** or 206.233.3732
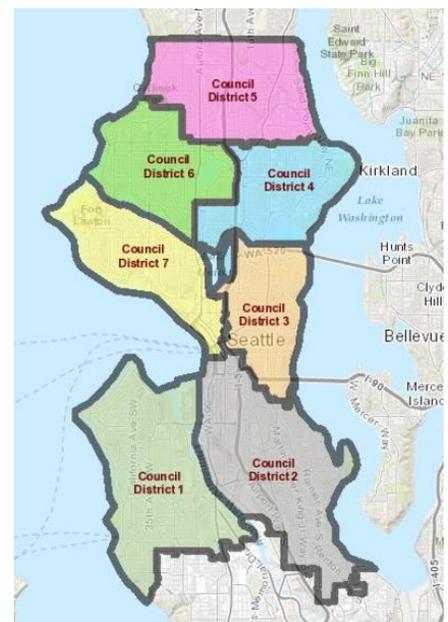
South Sector (Council Districts 1,2)
Yun Pitre, **Yun.Pitre@seattle.gov** or 206.386.1924

Citywide
Capacity Building Support
Thomas Whittemore, **Thomas.Whittemore@seattle.gov** or 206.684.4096

Figure 2: Map of Council Districts

Method of Informational Interviews

I decided semi-structured informational interviews would be the best way to conduct research about community organizations. Attending informational interviews in person at the organization being interviewed or over the phone allowed me to develop relationships with community organizations much more efficiently than would be possible over email. A large portion of the information discussed in the interviews is available online, but there is no guarantee as to when it was last updated or if it is still accurate. Conducting interviews allowed for some flexibility in the questions being asked while ensuring that similar questions were asked of all organizations. The interview portion of this project will be deemed successful based on the range of interviews and quality analysis as a result of the interviews. Attending interviews in person also helped keep the interviewees comfortable and served as an opportunity to tour local nonprofit organizations.

The process began by identifying which organizations would be important to interview. I knew from the start that I wanted a range geographic location and size of organization. I began searching by contacting the organizations listed as Business Improvement Areas or Districts on the Office of Economic Development website. I assumed that since these organizations were guaranteed to have funding they might be more likely to answer my initial contact email. I contacted the Ballard Alliance, the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority, the University District Partnership, the Downtown Seattle Association; the Alliance for Pioneer Square, the SODO Business Improvement Area. the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce and the Columbia City Business Association through email and was able to quickly set up appointments. I also emailed the West Seattle Junction but never heard back. Seattle Tourism, the Downtown Seattle Association and the Alliance for Pioneer Square share resources so I was able to talk to a staff member who represented all three organizations.

In a past CEP class we studied the Beacon Hill neighborhood so I was able to reach out using pre-existing contacts to interview the Beacon Hill Merchants Association and the Beacon Hill

Council of Seattle. One of the questions I asked each interviewee towards the end of the meeting was "Are there any other community organizations or nonprofits you think I should reach out to?" By asking this question I was able to contact the Phinney Neighborhood Association, the Wallingford Chamber of Commerce, and Seattle Neighborhood Greenways.

I also interviewed two City of Seattle officials: Karen Ko who works as the Central Sector Community Engagement Coordinator and Christina Ghan who works for the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections.

Figure 3: Neighborhood Nonprofit Organizations interviewed in this project.
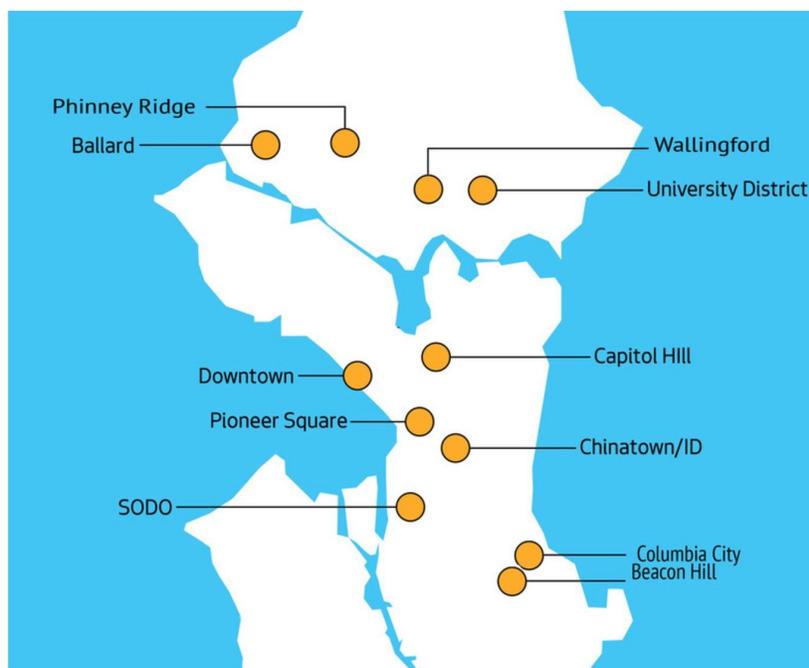
Timeline for Conducting Interviews

1. Identify Neighborhood organizations and city officials to contact
2. Send out initial email asking for informational interview and tailor questions to organization
3. Confirm meeting time and location
4. Attend informational interview and take notes
5. Send thank you email

Data

Table 1: Overview & Services Offered by Neighborhood Organizations

	FTE	Business Directory	Monthly E-Newsletter	Calendar on Website	Translated into Spanish	Featured Businesses	Funded Using BIA	Job Postings	Programs
Phinney Neighborhood Association	2.5	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Ballard Alliance	3.0	X		X		X	X		X
Wallingford Chamber of Commerce	1.5		X	X		X			X
University District Partnership	4.0		X	X		X	X		X
Downtown Seattle Association	9.0	X	X	X		X	X		X
Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce	1.75	X		X		X	X		X
Beacon Hill Merchants Association	1.0	X	X	X	X (Selected Portions)	X			X
Beacon Hill Council of Seattle	0.0		X	X					X
Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority	1.25			X			X		X
SODO Business Improvement Area	1.5	X					X		X
Columbia City Business Association	1.0	X		X			X		X

Table 2: Methods for Understanding Community Wants & Needs

	One- on - One Talks	Open Community Meetings	Polls & Surveys	Canvasing or "on the ground"	Hosting Networking Events	Stakeholder Meetings	E-Newsletter or Emails (Open Rate)	Social Media- See Table 3
Phinney Neighborhood Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 60%	X
Ballard Alliance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 50-60%	X
Wallingford Chamber of Commerce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X No Data	
University District Partnership	X	X	X	X	X	X	X No Data	X
Downtown Seattle Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 60-70%	
Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 30%	X
Beacon Hill Merchants Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 50-60%	X
Beacon Hill Council of Seattle	X	X	X	X		X	X 60-70%	
Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority	X	X	X	X	X	X	X No Data	
SODO Business Improvement Area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 40-50%	X
Columbia City Business Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X 40-50%	X

Table 3: Online Presence of Neighborhood Organizations

	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Youtube	Flickr
Phinney Neighborhood Association	@PhinneyNeighborhoodAssociation 3,645 followers	@PNA_Updates 584 followers	@phinneyneighborhoodassociation 516 followers	N/A	N/A
Ballard Alliance	@BallardChamberofCommerce 579 followers	@BallardAlliance 270 followers	@ballardalliance 18 followers 0 posts yet	N/A	N/A
University District Partnership	@UDistrictUnique 1,162 followers	@UDPartnership 558 followers	@udistrictpartnership 148 followers	N/A	N/A
Downtown Seattle Association	@DowntownSeattle 18,601 followers	@downtownseattle 1,370 followers	@downtownseattle 3,741 followers	Downtown Seattle Association 39 subscribers	Downtown Seattle Association 33 Followers
Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce	@CapitolHillChamber 379 followers	@caphillchamber 2,683 followers	N/A	N/A	Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce 1 follower
Beacon Hill Merchants Association	@beaconhillmerchants 305 followers	@BHMerchants 351 followers	N/A	N/A	N/A
SODO Business Improvement Area	@SODOSeattle 249 followers	@SODO_BIA 60 followers	@sodo_bia 103 followers	N/A	N/A
Columbia City Business Association	@ColumbiaCityBusinessAssociation 825 followers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4: Relationship between Neighborhood Organizations & City of Seattle Departments

	Dept. of Neighborhoods (DON)	Seattle Dept. of Transportation (SDOT)	Office of Economic Development (OED)	Finance and Admin Services	Seattle Public Utilities (SPU)	Mayor's Office	Office of Arts & Culture	Port of Seattle
Phinney Neighborhood Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ballard Alliance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wallingford Chamber of Commerce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
University District Partnership	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Downtown Seattle Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Beacon Hill Merchants Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Beacon Hill Council of Seattle	X	X				X		
Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
SODO Business Improvement Area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Columbia City Business Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Analysis

<u>Services</u>

Throughout this process I found that each neighborhood takes pride in it's unique reputation and enjoys celebrating its diversity. There are a range of services by each nonprofit organization are relatively similar but geared towards the specific audience. Every organization offered services like community cleanups, art walks and special events but the names highlighted their diversity (eg. Hilloween, a Halloween event in Capitol Hill and RidgeRomp, a musical event geared towards children in Phinney Ridge). Every organization except for the SODO Business Improvement Area offered a calendar of events on their website. Erin from the SODO Business Improvement Area explained that the calendar function of the website host was expensive, so instead they send out email reminders for upcoming events. I was surprised that the Phinney Neighborhood Association and the Beacon Hill Merchants Association translated portions of their websites and documents into Spanish. This was explained by the high proportion of spanish language speakers using their services and the convenience of already having a native spanish speaker on each staff respectively.

The main observation from this project is the limited staff responsible for carrying out so many projects.Every organization I interviewed used E-Newsletters and felt that it was a time efficient way to distribute information. The open rates according to MailChimp, a popular email marketing software, ranged anywhere from 30% to 70%. When you consider that some of the larger organizations have thousands of people on the mailing list 30% is still a significant number (eg. the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce reaches 1,050 people- just 30% of the total mailing list of 3,500). The Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority, University District Partnership, and Wallingford Chamber of Commerce were not able to confirm their open rates but most likely they lie between 30% and 70% like the other organizations.

<u>Communication with the Community and City of Seattle Departments</u>

All organizations in this project communicate with their communities through hosting one-on-one conversations with long-time residents, host open community meetings, and collect feedback on their services through polls and surveys. The Wallingford Chamber of Commerce, the University District Partnership, Beacon Hill Council of Seattle, and the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation & Development Authority did not have any forms of social media. Every participating in social media has an office phone number, general inquiry email, website and facebook. The majority of organizations using social media use Twitter and Instagram regularly. Youtube and Flickr accounts don't seem to have a high return on time. The Downtown Seattle Association and Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce both have flickrs accounts with low subscription rates.

All organizations, except for the Beacon Hill Council, communicate at least once a month with the Department of Neighborhoods (DON), the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), the Office of Economic Development (OED), the Finance and Administrative Services Department, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), the Mayor's Office, and the Office of Arts and Culture. The Ballard Alliance works with the Port of Seattle due to it's proximity to the waterfront. The majority of communications happen through a mixture of email, phone calls, skype, and in-person meetings. All interviewees said they feel they communicate more clearly in person. This is an issue considering a large proportion of work that has to occur over email or phone calls due to the logistics of scheduling in person readings.

Recommendations

Creating connections, like the Inclusive Outreach Guide recommends, seems to be the best method for sharing ideas. Building relationships between neighborhood organizations would help build a sense of camaraderie and shared expertise. Additionally, this could help the Community Engagement Coordinators be able to help more organizations.

Leveraging existing technology designed to make scheduling easier like when2meet and doodle poll could potentially allow people to meet in person ultimately leading to high quality work. File sharing technology like google Drive and dropbox could help to minimize the amount of time recreating documents or workplans for events that happen monthly, quarterly, or annually. By sharing editable documents there would be a record of what worked and what didn't work with explanations about the failures.

The most important suggestion I have is a systematic shift in mindset of urban planning values. Interpersonal relationships allow projects to be completed, communities to engage in dialogue, and provide for happier communities. Until the process of forming relationships is valued equally to the product as a result from the process it will be difficult to track time building relationships and therefore they may not be considered as traditionally valuable.

Reflection on Project

This project has helped me to better understand how to conduct an informational interview; the use and structure of Business Improvement Areas; and the type of work that community nonprofit organizations carry out. During this project I began to understand the difficulty of coordinating with multiple organizations at the same time. Occasionally the smaller organizations would cancel, ask to move appointments or forget that we had an interview scheduled. altogether. Everyone who I spoke to seemed to enjoy being recognized for their work and appreciated the opportunity to share information about some of their favorite projects. One issue that I encountered was the difficulty in identifying community organizations to interview. I worked around this problem by contacting organizations identified by the Office of Economic Development through their Business Improvement Area (BIA) program and then asking if the interviewees knew of any other organizations that I should be contacting. Eventually, I came into contact with Karen Ko, a Community Engagement Coordinator who has a list of neighborhood organizations. Once I began working off of that list I quickly realized that it was not up to date, as several emails bounced back and many more were never answered.

I became more familiar with the process of conducting an informational interview from the initial contact to sending out thank you notes as this project progressed. At the beginning I was very nervous and perhaps too direct in the way that I was asking questions. I became better at gauging the comfort level of interviewees, staying on easier questions like "Tell me a little about your organization" or "How has your day been" until we had gained trust; realized that sending out questions ahead of time, especially when asking for data and public outreach methods was vital; and setting up the appointments (ex. Giving three times I'm free to meet in the initial email). Conducting informational interviews has allowed me to gain insights from planning and community outreach professionals, practice the pitch about what I'm studying in school and what I'm interested in and form connections with organizations that I wouldn't otherwise have had access to. I think that ultimately conducting the informational interviews from this project will help me feel more comfortable when I am interviewing for jobs and graduate school. The next time I conduct informational interviews I will invest in a tape recorder. I recorded the majority of interviews using my cell phone, but the sound quality makes it difficult to understand and it wasn't possible to record informational interviews I conducted over the phone. I think that having a better way to transcribe notes would have added to the overall ease and quality of this project.

Overall, I am happy with this project. I think that it highlights the large amount of work that nonprofit organizations do to create livable, vibrant communities.

Next Steps

I am working with Karen Ko, the local Community Engagement Coordinator, to update her list of contacts for organizations who I have interviewed. I will share the information that I have collected with her and the organizations who are interested. I will be sharing a list of free community events and volunteer opportunities with the Community, Environment & Planning community.

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Appendix I: Interview Questions

Could you tell me a little bit about your organization?

How long have you worked for your organization?

What is the target demographic of your organization?

What does your day to day job look like?

How does your agency do public outreach/engage with the public? With what levels of success?

How do you define public outreach?

Are there specific methodologies that you use for sharing your knowledge with the City of Seattle? Which departments does this include?

What services does your organization provide? What is the mission of your organization?

Typically, at any one given time how many projects (ex. Events, advocacy, information sharing, long term neighborhood planning) is your organization involved in?

How large is your staff?

What project are you most proud of?

Do you tend to communicate better in person or over the phone?

Appendix II: List of Organizations Interviewed

An Huhyhn-
International District (Public Space and Community Coordinator at SCIDpda)

Angela Casteneda-
Beacon Hill (Executive Director at Beacon Hill Merchants Association)

Maria Batayola-
Beacon Hill (Board Chair of North Beacon Hill Community Council)

Megan Arnaud-
Columbia City (Board Member of Columbia City Business Association)

Devin Reynolds-
Ballard (Economic Development Specialist at Ballard Alliance)

Mike Stewart-
Ballard (Executive Director at Ballard Alliance)

Lee Harper-
Phinney Ridge (Executive Director at Phinney Neighborhood Association)

Erin Goodman-
SODO (Executive Director SODO Business Improvement Area)

Paul Dobosz-
Downtown (Senior Manager at the Downtown Seattle Association)

Chase Landrey-

University District (UDistrict Partnership)

Francis Janes-
International Organization (JUST Program Manager at the International Living Future Institute)

Cathy Tutle-
Overarching Organization (Executive Director at Seattle Neighborhood Greenways)

Christina Ghan-
Senior Planner Department of Construction and Industry

Karen Ko-
Community Engagement Coordinator at Department of Neighborhoods

Appendix III: Initial Contact Email

Hello,

My name is Emily Heim. I am a senior in the Community, Environment & Planning program at the University of Washington. I am writing my senior capstone about the perceptions of City of Seattle outreach efforts, local neighborhood knowledge, and how neighborhood organizations gather information from their stakeholders.

I was wondering if there was a time either this week or next week that we could discuss the methods that (*Insert nonprofit organization)* uses to inform the community of upcoming projects and the perceptions that the community has about what should be improved. Typically I am free anytime after 1:00 pm Monday, Wednesday, Friday and after 3 pm on Thursdays.

I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Emily Heim
Community, Environment & Planning
Operations Coordinator at UW Intramural Activities Building
University of Washington

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