

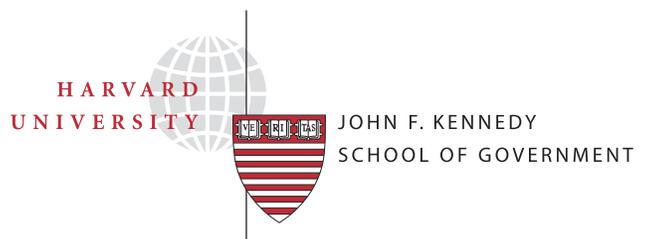
LESSONS FROM KATRINA:

HOW A COMMUNITY CAN SPEARHEAD SUCCESSFUL DISASTER RECOVERY



The Broadmoor Guide for Planning and Implementation

The Broadmoor Project
Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University





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New Orleans Community Engagement Initiative.

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Acknowledgement goes to the residents of the Broadmoor community with whom the authors lived and worked in New Orleans. The community, with leaders like LaToya Cantrell and Hal Roark, is the model for this community-driven planning and implementation process guidebook. The Broadmoorians have shown great resilience, taking action and moving forward in spite of the chaotic, confusing post-disaster environment of the Gulf Coast.

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LETTER FROM BROADMOOR

We welcome you to read this guidebook and hope that you can find elements that are helpful to you in your own community's recovery efforts. We, the residents of Broadmoor, are happy to provide extensive information from our own planning and implementation process. We want to share some of the lessons we have learned during this post-Katrina period, in the hopes that it will help as we all move forward in rebuilding. This is a symbol of our commitment to that, in the spirit of collaboration and sharing.



In the pages of this guidebook you can get a real sense of how Broadmoor residents have come together and taken the project of recovery into their own hands. We have organized and have followed a structured planning process that has resulted in the creation of a redevelopment plan and propelled us forward into the implementation of specific rebuilding projects. Collectively, we spent tens of thousands of hours determining for ourselves what we wanted our neighborhood to be like in the future, and we developed strategies for how we were going to make the plan a reality. This has been a rare and extraordinary coming together of community. Broadmoorians have driven the planning process, and are now actively involved in managing the recovery projects, addressing issues such as education, housing, rebuilding the community center and the library, crime and safety, and business recovery.

Throughout the entire planning and ongoing implementation process we have documented the stages along the way, saving flyers, agendas, and minutes, and taking countless photos. It is a process with its roots in the community; those participating in and leading all the meetings come from Broadmoor. But we have sought to bring a level of professionalism and transparency to the process, and believe that it is on par with national best practice standards. This has not been easy for a neighborhood that had 28% poverty before Katrina, and who after Katrina had lost everything.

We believe that others can learn and draw on what we have accomplished and continue to work toward during this rebuilding period. It is an approach to recovery that all residents of New Orleans, from all the different neighborhoods, can follow. And we believe that the issues we have grappled with are the ones that will face any community around the world after a disaster. It is our hope that some of our learnings might help another community struck by disaster. Our process isn't perfect, and this guidebook explains how to overcome some of the challenges that we came up against. There is no single formula for a community-driven process. The diversity of neighborhoods in this city, and elsewhere, means that each neighborhood will go about rebuilding in its own way. But the underlying principles of inclusiveness, transparency, and professionalism are ones that all communities can embrace.

Thank you for your interest in Broadmoor's planning and implementation process. We hope you find it helpful!

*LaToya Cantrell, President Broadmoor Improvement Assoc.
Hal Roark, Executive Director, Broadmoor Development Corp.*

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INTRODUCTION



COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLANNING

This document is intended to serve as a guidebook to a community-driven planning process. It provides a phase-by-phase analysis of the planning and implementation process for neighborhood redevelopment, complete with sample documentation and details of the myriad components that make up such a process. It is written based on the model of Broadmoor, a New Orleans neighborhood that sustained severe flood damage from Hurricane Katrina. The Broadmoor community-driven planning and implementation model, as outlined in this guidebook, is intended to be applied to other New Orleans neighborhoods, communities throughout the Gulf Coast, and other communities around the world facing post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.

The Broadmoor model is an example of a community-driven planning and implementation process that has been developed, applied, and tested in a real world, post-disaster context. The process has been extensively documented, from the smallest meetings and discussions to the community-wide design workshops and planning meetings. Such thorough documentation makes feasible its application as a model for this guidebook.

THE PROCESS

The use of a structured, organized planning process with different phases and specified goals improves the efficiency of planning and increases the likelihood of success. The mobilization and organization of community leadership, committee leaders and volunteers help set up the structures for the phased planning process. A core leadership provides the necessary representation for the entire community. Residents will not come together and reach a consensus as a community without leadership that can guide the process.

Community involvement in the process, with residents themselves driving the process, increases the likelihood of the final product (the Plan) being embraced by the community. Through a bottom-up approach, the residents remain involved even after the planning has been completed. Giving the community ownership of the process institutionalizes the vision, and keeps residents involved all the way through to the implementation phase.

A structured process facilitates two-way communication with multiple community stakeholders, including returned residents, displaced residents, local community and city leaders, the business community, other neighborhoods, and funding sources. It provides a mechanism with which to explain the elements of the planning process, from beginning to end.

Community Planning Process

- Phase 1** Impetus for Change
- Phase 2** Community Organizing
- Phase 3** Meeting & Consensus
- Phase 4** Design, Draft, Release

Implementation Phase

- Fund Raising
- Project Development
- Partnership Networks





PLANNING PROCESS PHASES

There are four phases in this guide to the community-driven planning process, followed by the implementation phase. These phases are not stand-alone. Many phase components overlap and are ongoing as the planning process moves forward. Repopulation efforts that begin in Phase 1 do not stop until the entire community is repopulated. Early on, as the vision for redevelopment begins to be articulated, efforts to develop partnership networks must begin, and continue throughout the process to facilitate the implementation of the projects. Community participation and input is a constant as well, looping throughout every phase of the process. The characteristics of the community-driven planning process allow the space for input on large and small scales, and in multiple forums.

PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENTS

PHASE I: IMPETUS FOR CHANGE

- 1.1 Community Rallies/Meetings
- 1.2 Input & Consensus
- 1.3 Goals & Vision
- 1.4 Repopulation & Data Collection (methodology)
- 1.5 Outreach/Communication

PHASE 2: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

- 2.1 Neighborhood Association Set-up
- 2.2 Neighborhood Meetings Guide
- 2.3 Community Subgroups Set-up (Sample documents)
- 2.4 Community Partnerships- Identification
- 2.5 Website Communication
- 2.6 Repopulation: Block Captain Program Development

PHASE 3: MEETING & CONSENSUS

- 3.1 Subgroup Meetings: Analysis
- 3.2 Community Planning Meeting
- 3.3 Committee/Subcommittee Meetings
- 3.4 Block Captain Program Implementation
- 3.5 Marketing

- 3.6 Partnership development
- 3.7 Community Mapping/Housing survey project

PHASE 4: DESIGN, DRAFT & RELEASE OF PLAN

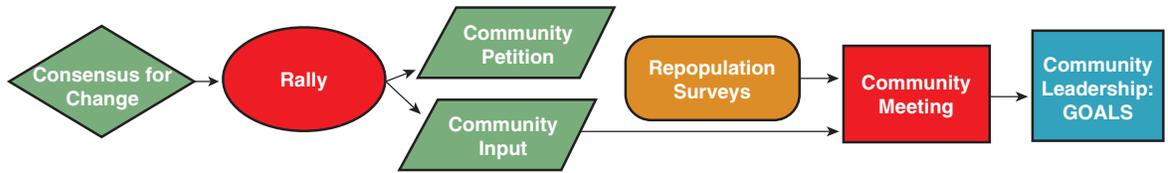
- 4.1 Community Design Workshop
- 4.2 Subcommittee Drafting Sessions
- 4.3 Final Document: Editing & Formatting
- 4.4 Plan Unveiling

IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING

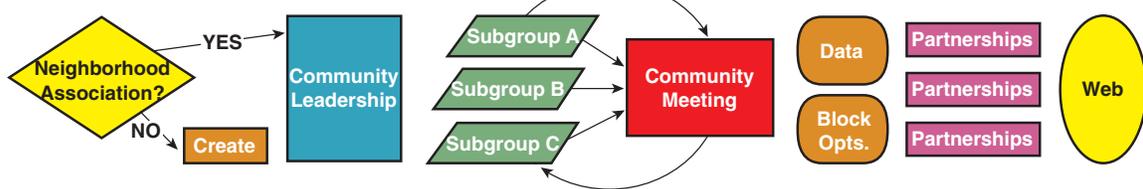
- 5.1 Challenges & Process of Implementation
- 5.2 Organization & Structure
- 5.3 Detailed Plans
- 5.4 Fund Raising: Partnership Networks
- 5.5 Status Reporting & Measurement
- 5.6 Ongoing Outreach

COMMUNITY PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION: PROCESS MAP

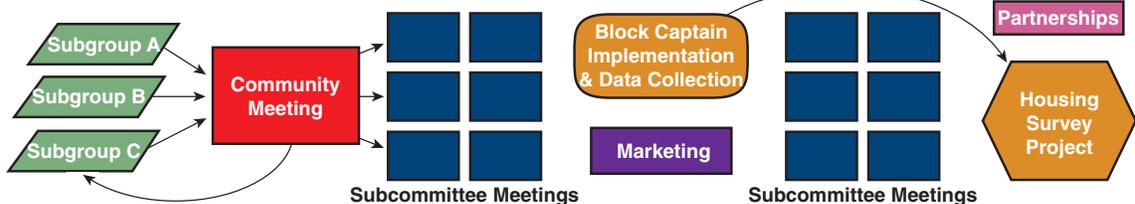
PHASE 1: IMPETUS FOR CHANGE



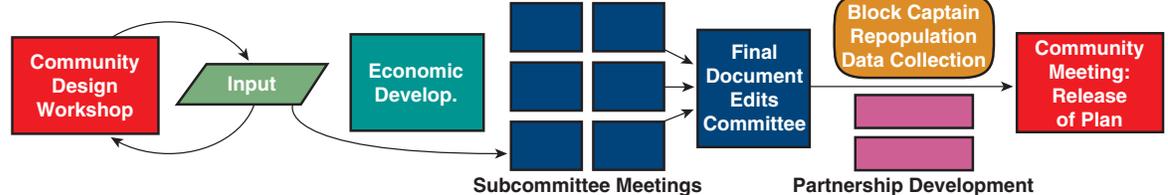
PHASE 2: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING



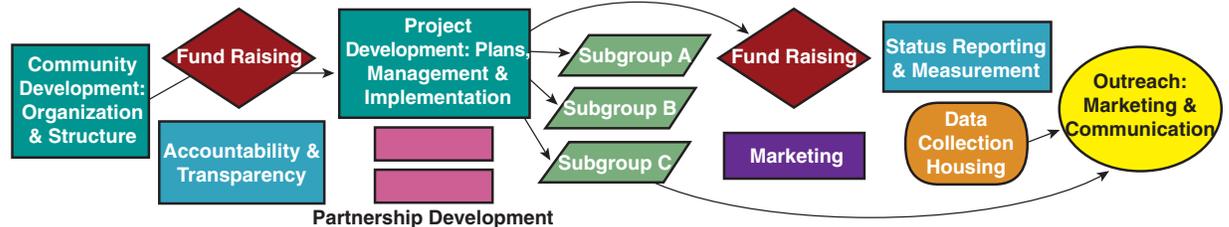
PHASE 3: MEETING & CONSENSUS-BUILDING



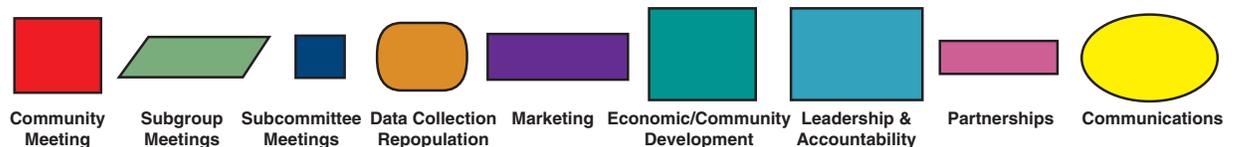
PHASE 4: DESIGN, DRAFT, & RELEASE OF PLAN



IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: FUNDING & PROJECTS



MAPPING LEGEND





THE BOTTOM-UP NEIGHBORHOOD APPROACH

In post-disaster situations, reconstruction planning, assistance, funding, and responsibility often comes from the top-down in a centralized approach to recovery and rebuilding. A centralized reconstruction approach is often managed by city, state, or federal government, and/or by an international agency, such as the United Nations. Centralized management and support is vital to effective and efficient reconstruction that follows best-practices. Emergency funding can be appropriated and distributed to areas affected by the disaster, and myriad agencies are coordinated to move reconstruction forward.

But rebuilding is really an individual task. Rebuilding is a task undertaken by individual homeowners and business owners: home-by-home, business-by-business, and block-by-block. While centralized authorities can support and stimulate this effort, the actual work of rebuilding (other than public infrastructure) is a bottom-up decentralized approach.

The decisions made by tens of thousands of individuals determine the outcome. These decisions are made by individuals in response to the specific context of their situation. They take their cues from their neighbors and from what other individuals are deciding. This decision-making environment is influenced by the media, the local leaders, and by what they see being done in other neighborhoods.

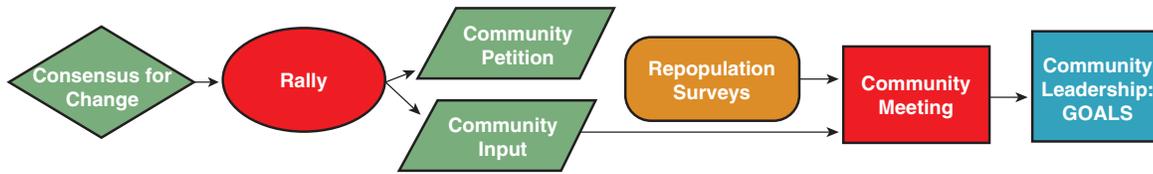
A decentralized neighborhood approach to rebuilding starts with the individual and the next largest building block from the bottom-up: the neighborhood or community. The collective power of individuals is harnessed by the banding together and organizing of individuals into neighborhood groups. These groups address issues close to their home: the school down the street, the park across the road, the community center for their children. These neighborhoods are best suited to planning for their own community. They have the vision, knowledge and motivation. They are also the key drivers of implementation – they are the stakeholders willing to fight to bring their neighborhood back. They know that by taking ownership over their planning and recovery process, they also have to see it through to completion. Those invested and empowered from the early stages will have the motivation to continue their involvement beyond the planning process and into the implementation of the recovery phases.

PHASE 1



IMPETUS FOR CHANGE

PHASE 1: IMPETUS FOR CHANGE



- 1.1 Community Rallies/Meetings (Organization & Advertisement)
- 1.2 Input & Consensus
- 1.3 Articulate Goals & Vision
- 1.4 Repopulation & Data Collection (Surveys)
- 1.5 Community Outreach & Communication

Phase 1 is the period during which a community coalesces around a shared threat to the neighborhood's viability and defines the strategy to move forward in the reconstruction and redevelopment process. In a post-disaster context, challenges facing communities are widespread. Critical decisions about reconstruction and redevelopment options must be made, and it is necessary to find unity within the community and engage in the rebuilding process at the neighborhood level. The process needs to begin as soon as possible, when there is enough of a critical mass to begin the planning discussion and arrive at a consensus for the process to move forward. Setting up the initial structure from the outset is vital. During the early stages, community input and volunteers must be solicited to bring as many voices and participants into the process to reflect the diversity of the community. Having an inclusive forum for discussions is important because it brings a greater degree of legitimacy to the overall process



NEIGHBORHOOD RALLIES/MEETINGS

The beginning of the planning process is often characterized by a group of galvanized residents who are successful in rallying their fellow neighbors around the issues that threaten the community. Every community has a different set of issues or challenges, depending upon the nature of the disaster and the subsequent scope of the reconstruction. In the case of Broadmoor, the threat to the entire community's survival came in the form of a report that suggested the community be turned into green space. It was around this issue that the community began to organize and take the steps to prove its viability.



Community meetings and rallies are critical to communicate the goals and mission of the redevelopment planning process to the residents. Achieving consensus for the planning process structure is important in this phase. The challenges must be acknowledged, as well as the reality that the process will not be easy. The community will not be rebuilt overnight.

It is critical to set realistic expectations about community redevelopment from the very beginning of the planning process.

But it is equally important to strike a tone of hope and optimism. The more community involvement there is in the process, the more the residents will be able to feed off the energy and motivation of their fellow neighbors. There must be a clear message that public participation and input is expected and welcome. A community-driven planning process is only successful if residents are willing to step up and be a part of the process in some way. Everyone can find a way to be involved, and must be welcome at the planning table. Yet, it is also important to be aware that with inclusiveness comes the challenge of managing the diverse views within the community. In an attempt to arrive at a community-wide consensus, identification of different redevelopment priorities will be reflected in the diverse socio-economic, racial, gender, and age demographics of the residents. The role of negotiation and mediation will be important in this process.

In a post-disaster situation it might be tempting for residents to sit back and wait for city, state or federal leaders to take charge and tell them what to do. It seems counterintuitive that the victims of the disaster should be the ones in charge of their own recovery. But the rebuilding of a community cannot be done by government alone. City planning departments, city councils, and mayors are vital to the rebuilding effort, but the task of rebuilding an entire community requires the involvement of the entire community – a business as usual approach will not work.

WHAT MOBILIZES A COMMUNITY?

- Viability is threatened
- Post-Disaster reconstruction needs
- External forces exerting pressure for change
- Internal forces exerting pressure for change

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

It is very important in this first phase to have an honest, open conversation with residents addressing the real challenges of the community-driven process. The community leadership will need to highlight what the road ahead will entail, and be candid about what to be prepared for.

“Us” Against the World

A small neighborhood taking on the monumental task of recovery may feel like an ambitious endeavor. Especially when larger forces are trying to pull communities in other directions, the pressures may be intense.

Prove Viability

A community that proves its viability through a comprehensive planning process and implementation strategy indicates legitimacy and implies eligibility for funding and other resources.

Values

From the very beginning, values must be articulated based on principles of inclusiveness, transparency, professionalism, and respect for all participating in the process. The residents themselves must establish their community’s values.

Professionalism

An expectation of high professional standards must be set from the very beginning. This will lend legitimacy to the entire process, in the eyes of the community residents, local leaders, other communities, and outside funders assisting in recovery.

No Guarantee

Those in the community leadership who stand up and make the call to action must be honest about the uncertainties surrounding the planning and implementation process. They must acknowledge that there is no telling how this may turn out, but this is the best shot.

Emotional, Therapeutic Value

The ability to dive in and get involved in something that is constructive, positive, and participatory is an important way to work through the emotional issues, channel anger, and harness positive energy. In a time of great uncertainty and inaction, the importance of a community’s planning process is that it is something residents can be tangibly involved in.

Need People to be Involved

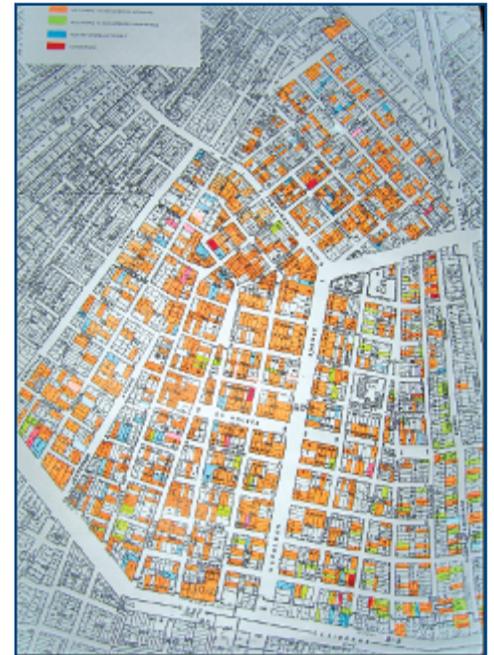
If people expect things to be accomplished through the bottom-up approach, the involvement of residents is critical to the success of that process. From the early planning stages all the way through implementation, citizen participation is vital.

Reject Myths

In a chaotic, post-disaster environment, rumors and untruths will abound. These must be explained and rejected, especially those myths that are contrary to the values articulated by the community.

REPOPULATION

During Phase 1 of the planning process it is important to conduct a situation analysis of the community, which involves gathering information about physical conditions as well as the population itself. The challenges in gathering repopulation data will vary depending upon the scale of the disaster and the level of resident displacement. The early stages may simply focus on capturing the information of those who have returned through the use of in-person surveys, flyers, and repopulation tables set up at all community events. From the very beginning, someone must be tasked with gathering all of the data in a central location. Many sources of data may initially be unverified, such as a neighbor reporting on the whereabouts of another neighbor, and must be updated in a central location as soon as they are verified. Additional consideration must be taken about how to “count” the repopulation: by people or by buildings. In many cases, it is best to count structures/residences instead of people because of the variable nature of renters and landlords.



REPOPULATION: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Survey #1 – Neighborhood Association Petition. As a petition, it can be designed to be a list of those residents committed to returning and rebuilding – a direct outgrowth of the initial rallies and community meetings during Phase 1. This survey does not necessarily capture the names and addresses of those who are undecided or who do not intend to return. More detailed information can be captured via subsequent survey techniques.

Survey #2 – Community Repopulation Data Form. As resident committees are formed for planning, a Repopulation Committee can create a repopulation data sheet that captures property owner data. It can be used primarily through the Block Captain outreach strategy. (See Phase 2)

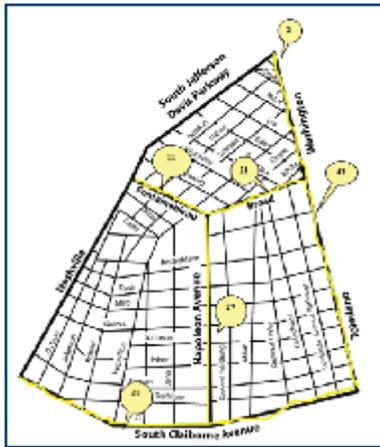
Survey #3 – Online Repopulation Data Form. This survey is a methodological refinement of the first repopulation data form. It takes a more professional and organized approach to conduct a thorough count of property-owner intentions. An online survey should also be made available at this point to reach out to those displaced residents living temporarily outside of the community/city.

Survey #4 – Community Mailer. This is where a partnership with a professional marketing or market research firm can assist with design and mailing services. This mailer should be sent out when there is enough data from the National Change of Address Registry (NCOA) so that the largest number of residents (especially those displaced) can receive the mailer. Tax assessor mailing lists can be “cross-checked” against the NCOA list to get the current mailing address of displaced residents. Most displaced residents file a change of address with the post office in the first few weeks after a disaster as a means of receiving FEMA or other assistance and insurance paperwork.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH/COMMUNICATION

In the early stages of community organizing, it is critical to use multiple modes of communication, both internally with residents, and externally with others in the broader community. This involves email blasts, flyers and banners, website alerts, yard signs, etc. The greater the level of participation by members of the community at the early stages, the more legitimate the future planning will be in the eyes of the community itself. Using multiple communication techniques will keep residents up-to-date regarding planning developments and meetings, and serve to encourage more participation in the process. It will also keep the local government and media aware of community developments.



Meeting notice locations

EMAIL BLASTS

One effective tool for community outreach and communication is mass emailing. This can be executed on a small scale or later, when a neighborhood website has been set up, through an external service that can handle large email blasts. These email blasts will serve as a way to keep residents updated about developments in the planning process. The key to the success of email blasts is that they are concise and to-the-point. It is also important that residents are not inundated with emails, because a high frequency of emails will reduce their effectiveness as a communication tool.

Sample of website email alert registration:

Sign up and...
 make sure you stay up to date with the latest news and information concerning our historic neighborhood.

First Name:

Last Name:

Subgroup (A, B, or C):

Your E-mail Address:

FLYERS, LAWN SIGNS AND BANNERS

Another form of communication that can be utilized early and often in the planning and organizing process is lawn signage. It is an effective and inexpensive method by which to communicate unity within the neighborhood. Signs can also communicate with non-residents and local officials a certain level of organization and mobilization. The signs can have a slogan or just the name of the community. They should be positive- a symbol of hope despite the challenges facing the community.

Larger banners and lamppost signage are other ways of communicating events in the community, such as festivals or community meetings. In many cases it will be possible to secure a discounted rate from a sign company that is willing to assist in these communication efforts. Placement of signs must be taken into consideration, so that residents in all areas of the community receive adequate exposure to the messages and announcements.

