INTEGRATING TRANSPORTATION and COMMUNITY PLANNING

iTRaC

Helping Communities face the challenge and impacts of growth while maintaining community character and a sense of place.

Place Making and Context Sensitive Solutions

iTRaC is the Nashua Regional Planning Commission's new approach to community planning that focuses on integrating transportation, land use and environmental planning. The program was developed to assist communities in dealing with the challenges of growth in a coordinated way that sustains community character and a sense of place.

What is Place Making?

Place Making is an exercise that is used to help a community to define the character, problems, and opportunities of a particular location. It is an easy way to receive and synthesize input from a large group of community stakeholders - from public officials to residents, businesses, schools and other relevant groups. It is also the beginning point in a planning method called *Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)* that is being used by the NH Department of Transportation in planning transportation projects.

What is Context Sensitive Solutions?

The NH DOT's official definition of CSS is "*a collaborative interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility.*"

CSS is a process in which communities take a central role in shaping transportation projects. Community stakeholders help to define problems, create vision statements, and provide input into the ultimate solution for their community.

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) and Tom Warne & Associates is assisting the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation in implementing this new planning technique. PPS defines CSS by the following:

"*The central tenet of CSS is that communities should not be molded to the requirements of motor vehicle traffic alone--transportation should preserve the scenic, historic, and environmental resources of the places it serves.*"

"If your goal is to create a place ... a design will not be enough.

To make an under-performing space into a vital 'place,' physical elements must be introduced that would make people welcome and comfortable, such as seating and new landscaping, and also through 'management' changes in the pedestrian circulation pattern and by developing more effective relationships between the surrounding retail and the activities going on in the public spaces.

The goal is to create a place that has both a strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting and activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often simple parts. This is easy to say, but difficult to accomplish."

-Project for Public Spaces

NRPC

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Place Making and Context Sensitive Solutions

Placemaking Principles for CSS:

Philosophical Underpinnings

1. The community is the expert.
2. Highways create place.
3. Teamwork is fundamental.
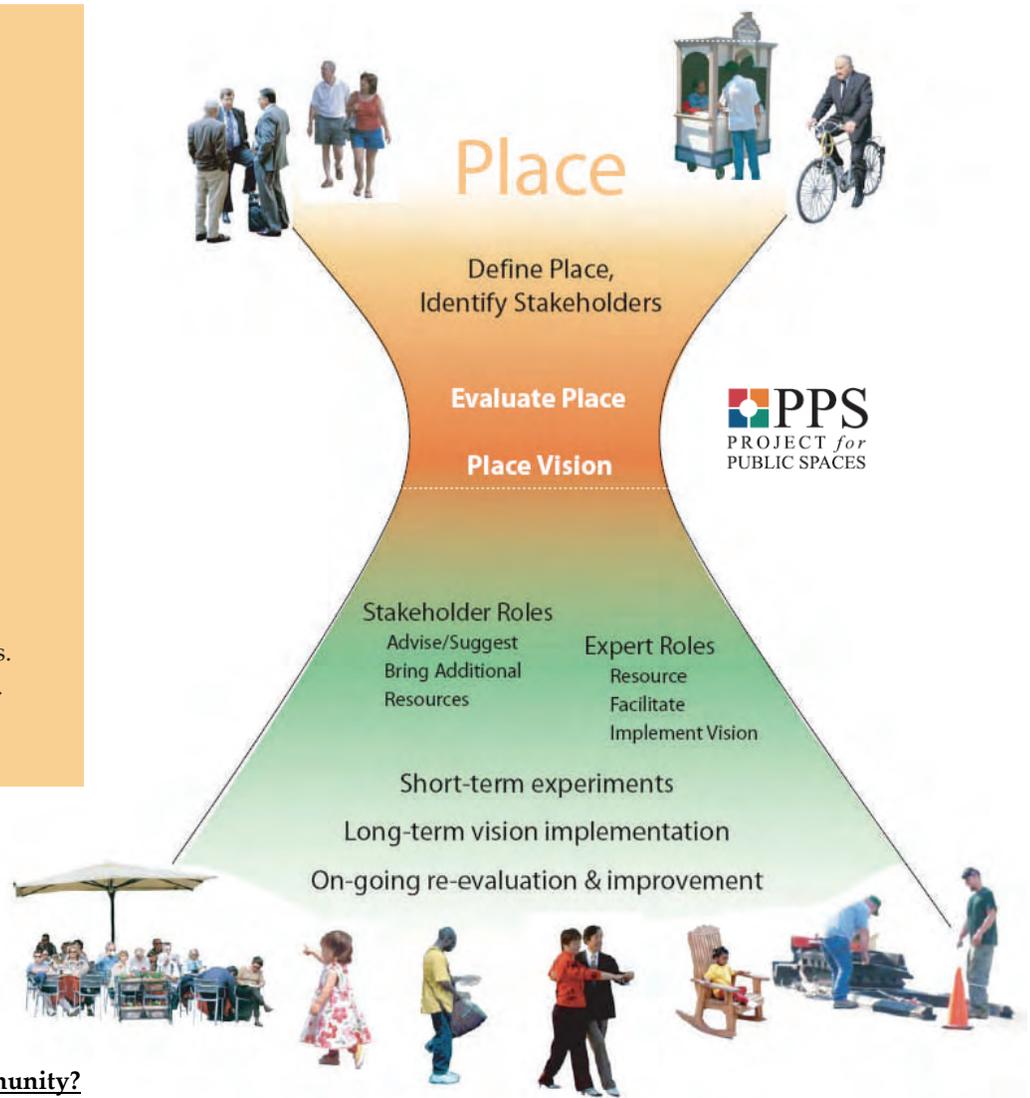4. Obstacles create opportunity.

Planning with the Community

5. Learn by observing
6. Develop a joint vision

Designing with the Community

7. Form supports function.
8. Synergistic solutions.

Implementation

9. Start with quick, small, visible success.
10. Money will follow vision and action.
11. The project is never complete.

Place

Define Place, Identify Stakeholders

Evaluate Place

Place Vision

PPS
PROJECT for
PUBLIC SPACES

Stakeholder Roles
Advise/Suggest
Bring Additional
Resources

Expert Roles
Resource
Facilitate
Implement Vision

Short-term experiments

Long-term vision implementation

On-going re-evaluation & improvement

What can Place Making do for my community?

Place Making can help communities clarify problems and visions for specific locations within the community. Communities can identify ideas for projects, and discover new opportunities for collaboration and problem-solving. NRPC planners will facilitate the Place Making Audit and work with your community to follow up on the outcomes.

How do I begin the Place Making process?

Contact Camille Pattison, iTRaC Program Manager to schedule the iTRaC introductory presentation. camillep@nashuarpc.org

"If you plan cities for cars and traffic,
you get cars and traffic.
If you plan for people and places,
you get people and places."

-Project for Public Spaces