

The Carleton Centre for Urban Research and Education (CURE) Network

Providing research and
evaluation support to the City of
Ottawa for the Neighbourhood
Planning Initiative

About the CURE Network

The **Carleton Urban Research and Education (CURE) Network** brings together researchers from a wide range of disciplines who share an interest in municipal and urban affairs and carrying out collaborative research in:

- community governance
- citizen engagement
- local capacity building around planning for infrastructure to support social, economic, and environmental sustainability

The Big Picture: Situating the NPI

Several examples of Canadian neighbourhood and community development initiatives (e.g. Vibrant Communities, Action for Neighbourhood Change, Sense of Community Projects) share the common purposes to:

- Improve the wellbeing of citizens
- Create cohesion within the neighbourhood/ community
- Strengthen the relationships between the neighbourhood and governments

Common Purposes...

- **Involve residents in local decision-making/ planning**
- **Establish linkages among service providers from the public, private, and voluntary sectors**
- **Build community capacity (leadership, organizational development)**
- **Increase community engagement/civic participation**
- **Facilitate access to services**
- **Integrate (government) departmental planning/ programming**

Research & Evaluation Support

The CURE Network has provided support to the City of Ottawa in the following key areas:

1. Backgrounder on Neighbourhood Development Evaluation Tools and Models
2. Multi-Stakeholders Design Workshop
3. Research Papers
4. Two Baseline Surveys

1. Neighbourhood Development Evaluation Tools and Models

This background paper outlined six types of tools and models:

- Quality of Life Indicators Projects
- Asset Mapping Tools
- Social Capital Indices
- Perceptual Snapshots
- Participants' & Stakeholders' Feedback
- Social Return on Investment Tools (SROI)

2. Stakeholders Design Workshop

Held on May 24, 2006, the following key stakeholder groups were identified for the Neighbourhood Planning Initiative:

- **Residents**
- **Local Business**
- **Community Based Organizations**
- **Surrounding Neighbourhoods**
- **Service-Providers and Facilities**
- **City of Ottawa (Staff and Departments)**

Stakeholders...

- **Politicians**
- **Media**
- **Key Influencers and Leaders**
- **Non-resident consumers, employees, and visitors**
- **City-at-large**

3. Research Papers

To support the implementation of NPI, research papers on the following topics were prepared:

- Citizen and Community Engagement Models
- Community Council Models
- Community Organizations
- City of Ottawa Initiatives and Experience

4. Conducted Two Surveys

- **About Hintonburg:** A survey was conducted to gather people's perceptions and ideas about the neighborhood, recent planning events, and their relationship with the city. *Total: 226 responses*
- **About the City:** An employee survey was conducted to gather perceptions and ideas about current linkages with other departments, relationships with neighbourhoods, and the impact of neighbourhood engagement on decision-making *Total: 135 responses*

Hintonburg Survey Findings

Connection to Hintonburg

Resident	115
Business	25
Association with a Community Organization	106
Non-resident working in the Neighbourhood	81
Resident of surrounding Neighbourhood	55

Hintonburg Views

“Community energy and staff energy and city resources are wasted by the lack of integration.”

“Across neighbourhood planning - to include a ‘common look and feel,’ despite differences. For example, street lights, and other street furniture (garbage cans, signs, benches, flowers, etc.)”

Satisfaction Rate with the City (1 to 5)

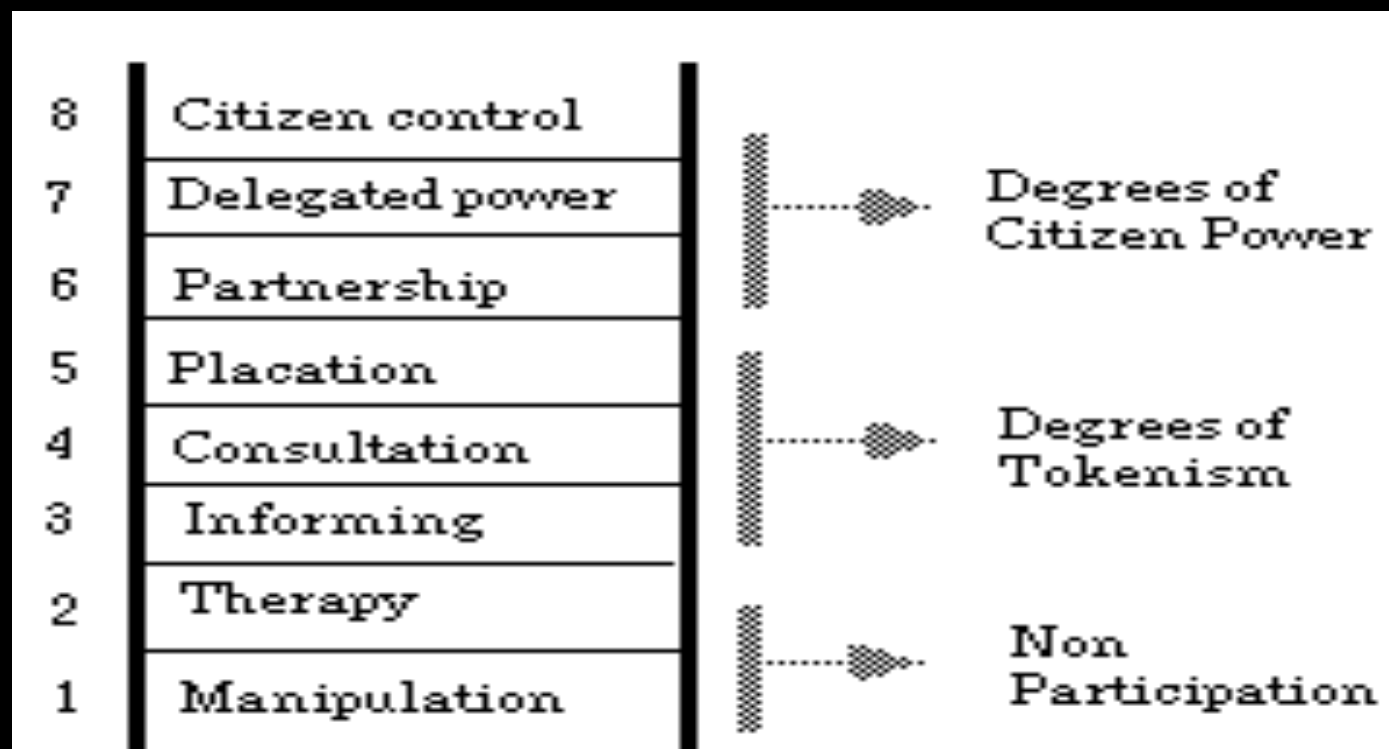
- Contacted the City of Ottawa for information over the past two years: *Average rate of 3.38*
- Contacted the City of Ottawa to request a service: *Average rate of 3.16*
- Contacted the City of Ottawa to provide feedback about a service: *Average rate of 2.88*
- 84% of respondents replied N/A

Hintonburg Views

“Residents have to feel that their participation is appreciated and really taken into account in planning for the area - rather than being given lip service and their ideas usually ignored.”

Ladder of Citizen Participation

(Sherry Arnstein, 1969)



Diversity and inclusiveness of Hintonburg events and activities (1 to 5)

- Community events: *Average rate of 3.60*
- Consultations: *Average rate of 2.82*
- Planning sessions: *Average rate of 2.60*
- Ongoing activities in the neighbourhood: *Average rate of 3.45*

Priorities for the Neighbourhood Planning Initiative (Process)

Respondents ranked the following priorities in order of importance:

1. To actively engage the neighbourhood in planning
2. To better co-ordinate across city departments
3. To reach out to residents who have not traditionally participated in planning
4. To improve access to City of Ottawa staff, services, and planning processes

Other Identified Priorities for the Neighbourhood Planning Initiative (Issues)

- **Crime reduction**
- **Greater community presence (among the media, in the neighbourhood, city etc).**
- **Improved visual aspects of community space**
- **Improved city planning to identify needs vs. resources, access, integration and interdependence of services, and responsiveness issues**
- **Development of vacant properties**

Other Suggestions

- **Strengthen communications, outreach & accessibility**
- **Foster a shared vision and identity in the neighbourhood**
- **Proceed proactively**
- **Clarify the boundaries of Hintonburg**
- **Listen to the community, use feedback and follow-up**
- **Build community capacity to get Involved**
- **Pay attention to public spaces**

Next Steps

- **Analysis of City of Ottawa Staff Survey**
- **Report to City of Ottawa staff and Neighbourhood Planning Initiative Steering Committee of both surveys**
- **Post Research Papers and Survey Reports**
- **Disseminate Research Papers**
- **Conduct Key Informant Interviews**
- **Begin orientation around the neighbourhood of Vars**

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