AARP Pop-Up Demonstration Tool Kit

Getting Started

Part 1 of designing and implementing the pop-up project

by the WALC Institute, AARP Livable Communities

Successful pop-up projects have an energized leader, convener or facilitator driving them forward. Since each community is different, a leader’s role can vary from bringing together the initial project team to organizing all of the event logistics; the exact role will need to be defined as the partners and team come together. However, it’s important that the leader or facilitator establish the following as key organizing principles for the group’s efforts:

- A pop-up project is a tool for helping to create long-term change
- Local experts, resources and vested create the greatest benefit
- Getting started is key

According to Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change, a series by Mike Lydon and Anthony Garcia of the Street Plans Collaborative, effective pop-up demonstrations feature:

1. A deliberate, phased approach to instigating change
2. An offering of local ideas for local planning challenges
3. A short-term commitment and realistic expectations
4. Low-risks with a possible high reward
5. The development of social capital between citizens and the building of organizational capacity between public/private institutions, nonprofit/NGOs, and their constituents

Planning a Pop-Up

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Success Stories
- Parklet
- Plaza
- Streetscape
- Protected bike lane
- Protected intersection
- Road diet and plaza

Continued
According to *The MEMFix Manual – A Practical Guide to Reimagining Your Neighborhood*, there are two very important factors in a successful pop-up demonstration project:

1. “The time, energy, and willingness of the residents, partners and activists who will be planning the event: a unified spirit combined with the vision and desire to change or a sense of potential must be present”

2. “The potential of the location to be a vibrant public space: neighborhoods that have the potential to be walkable, with buildings built to the sidewalk and that historically have had a mix of uses. Most important is that the location you choose is livable (or has the potential to be).”

There are three major factors for success in getting started:

1. **Showing Up:** In most communities, only a handful of people tend to show up at public meetings. And the same people tend to speak up at town halls and online. Help engage a new batch of advocates by showing up and bringing your leadership team and volunteers.

2. **Giving “It” a Name:** Projects become more real, to the organizers and the community-at-large when they’re given a name. Create a name, logo and a brand — and get the word out! Create a website, Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram accounts, and post your project’s activities and successes.

3. **Setting a Date:** Give yourself a deadline and use social media to announce a launch date to build interest and support for the pop-up demonstration event and projects. Pick a date and stick to it. This will force you and others to not procrastinate. Volunteers work well under strong leadership, and an event date is a good motivator.

Next: Engaging the Community and Making a Plan »
Getting Started (Website Links)


WALC Institute:  http://www.walklive.org/
AARP Livable Communities:  http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/

Tactical Urbanism: Short-Term Action for Long-Term Change:  http://www.street-plans.com/research-writing/

Street Plans Collaborative:  http://www.street-plans.com/our-firm/people/


Planning a Pop-Up (Box):


Success Stories


Protected Bike Lane:  http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-protected-bike-lane.html

Protected Intersection:  http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-protected-intersection.html